

The Curse of the Gods  
by AnotherKindOfStory

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Summary: It has been months since the famous battle against the Red Death. Hiccup and Toothless return to a normal life, until Hiccup seems to suffer the consequences of befriending a dragon. The Gods seem to have curse Hiccup and help him follow the a road of fate that he never could have ventured before. Contains Toothcup, Yaoi, and Violence in later chapters.

## 1. Chapter 1

Berk

Home

Just the usual morning here. Foggy, cold, miserable. Well it isn't that miserable. It's been a few months since Red Death was defeated. Life went on normally after that...well as normal as an island full of vikings and dragons could get. As soon as Hiccup's sudden popularity surge started, it ended. People move on and he was so thankful for that as he used to get swarmed down at the market when trying to buy goods. He could hardly go anywhere, period. He wanted to go to the cove, people followed. He wanted to go flying, people tagged along as much as they could. He wanted to take a bath, people waited outside the bath house. Absolute, torture. As for Astrid, that also went and left quickly. They definitely weren't cut out for each other. She was a little, aggressive, and he was a little, well, Hiccup. In the end, it was just Toothless and Hiccup, hanging out every morning, afternoon, evening, all the time really. They both never got bored of each others company as they wasted away their time enjoying their youth, enjoying their life.

\* \* \*

><p>Nudge.</p>

"Cut it out."

Nudge, Nudge.

"Stop."

Nudge, Nudge, Lick.

"Oh gross! This doesn't wash out ya know!" said Hiccup as he jerked up from his bed. He raised a hand and dragged it across his face to get all the dragon saliva off. Hiccup quickly looked over at a grinning Toothless, giving him a sharp glare before swiveling his body towards him.

"I'm up okay?" said a disgruntled Hiccup as he reached for his prosthetic leg, fixing it to his stump

"I know you get up early, but do you really have to wake me up early too?" asked Hiccup as he changed his clothes. Toothless simply nudged him and let out a loud purr.

"Yeah, yeah," says Hiccup as he put on a clean shirt. Hiccup turned to Toothless who was sitting in front of the door, waiting for his rider.

"So, what should we do today bud?" asked Hiccup as he walked up to Toothless. Toothless cocked his head to the side questioningly.

"You don't know either? Let's just focus on breakfast first," said Hiccup as he stepped around Toothless and out his bedroom door. Hiccup could hear the crackling of fire as he descended down his stairs, the room being illuminated by fire.

"Dad?" Hiccup called out. No response. Hiccup glanced around the room, seeing his father's chair empty.

\_ "I didn't think he would leave a fire going while he left," \_thought Hiccup as he stopped in the middle of the stairs, then he noticed a pot above the fire.

"I'm guessing another patrol and maybe some breakfast for us," Hiccup said to himself. He felt a nudge against his back and turned to see Toothless purring, trying to move him forward.

"Sorry bud," said Hiccup as he continued down the stairs. Hiccup walked over to the pot above the fire and stuck his finger in it. Hot, very hot.

"Ow! Geez, why, did I, do that," Hiccup asked himself as he put his finger in his mouth for comfort.

"Oh ew! Dad, stop trying to cook!" exclaimed Hiccup as pulled his finger from his mouth, spitting out what was left of the disgusting stew. Toothless let out a light chuckle, well, as much of a chuckle as a dragon can manage.

"Oh haha," said Hiccup sarcastically towards his friend, "Let's just go down to the market and get some food, how about it?" Toothless purred and bumped his head against Hiccup's stomach in agreement. Hiccup rubbed Toothless' head and scratched his ear some, eliciting a

loud purr from Toothless.

"You're the best, bud, now lets go," Hiccup said as he turned around, heading out the door. Hiccup looked up into the sky and saw masses of clouds covering any blue.

"Well, so much for flying today," said Hiccup sadly. Hiccup heard a low growl and turned to see an unhappy dragon. Toothless turned looked down at Hiccup and motioned to the sky.

"Bud, no, we would both be soaked and it's way to cold out for that. Well for me anyway," said Hiccup as he continued to walk towards the market. He could hear Toothless' unhappy grunt of acceptance.

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><p>It was a couple minute walk down to the market. It would have been quicker if Hiccup still had his other leg, but he had accepted his fate a long while ago. The aroma of fish, bread, and other goods could be smelled as they drew closer to the market. Toothless lifted his nose and smelled the sweet aroma. Toothless' started to drool a bit thinking of all the delicious things he could eat. Hiccup looked down at his dragon companion and started to laugh a bit at the sight.</p>

"Toothless, you know you can't eat all of it right?" asked Hiccup, nudging the Night Fury. Toothless let out a whine, feeling his dreams crushed.

"Oh come on ya big baby, I'll still get you something good," said Hiccup as he tried to run ahead of Toothless some. The Night Fury just stared at the odd sight of him running, the fake leg making Hiccup run a bit awkward. Toothless just shrugged and walked ahead of Hiccup.

"Oh come on! I've been practicing too!" yelled Hiccup in defeat.

Bang.

Hiccup stopped where he was and put a hand to his head. An intense drumming going on.

"Oh...ow..." said Hiccup as he felt as if his head were on fire. He took a step forward and started to stumble a bit. Toothless looked back to see his friend in obvious pain on the verge of collapsing. The Night Fury let out a frightened whine as he ran up to catch his friend from falling.

"I'm...I'm okay bud, I think...I just need a moment," said Hiccup as he slumped down to the ground. Almost as soon as it came, the throbbing pain left. Hiccup suddenly jerked up, shaking his head a bit.

"That was...weird," said Hiccup as he picked himself up from the ground with the Night Fury's help. Toothless quickly got closer to him, obviously worried about his human friend.

"I think I'm okay bud," said Hiccup. Toothless let out a low whine of doubt and started to lightly lick Hiccup's face.

"Hey, hey! Stop, I said I was fine!" protested Hiccup as he got smothered with licks, "Let's just get to the market and get food!" The duo slowly made their way into the market center, trying to figure out where they want to go to first. Toothless could smell something delicious and motioned over to a stall down the road a little. When he didn't get a response, Toothless looked over to Hiccup and saw him staring into the cloud filled sky.

"So...much...pain," Hiccup whispered out. Toothless slowly turned and sat in front of Hiccup. Blood slowly dripped from Hiccup's nose and down onto the ground and slow, rhythmic drips. Toothless let out a loud whine of worry and tried to lick the blood dripping from his friends face. Toothless was met with no resistance, just a subtle whisper.

"So...much...pain"

Toothless was scared and roared out to anyone, everyone, trying to get help. Most people stopped what they were doing and hurried over to the scene. One of the onlookers was Astrid who hurried over to Toothless' side.

"Oh my gods, Hiccup! Hiccup can you hear me?" Astrid said, slowly bringing her hand up to his head and pulled her hand away with a slight sizzling sound, "Ow! He's literally burning! Hiccup, can you hear me?"

"So...much...pain"

Astrid turned and called out frantic commands, "Alrik, go fetch the village Elder! Sven, go get Svelta now! Harald, go get the Cheif! Hurry, go, now!" Astrid turned back to Hiccup whose eyes had become red and irritated.

"Oh my gods, oh my gods, what do I do?" she said frantically. Toothless beside her stepped closer and tried to cool Hiccup down with slow licks.

"Good, good, keep him cool Toothless! Someone, grab some water!" When no one moved she pushed her way through the growing crowd and ran for water. Toothless noticed the onlookers drawing closer and closer. He turned and swept his tail pushing people back and roared. Astrid returned and sat the bucket of water next to Hiccup. She pulled out a rag and started to dab him with water and tried to get him to move.

"Okay Hiccup, we need to get you back to your house, can you move?" Astrid said, bringing Hiccup's gaze down to meet hers.

"Astrid...there's...so much...pain..." Hiccup said, slowly raising his gaze back to the sky. Astrid turned to the sky and saw nothing there but cloud after cloud.

"Hiccup, what, what do you see? Hiccup?" Astrid slowly rested her hands on his shoulders and tried to shake him from his daze. Hiccup's nose started to bleed again, this time, coming down faster. Hiccup looked down and back into Astrid's gaze.

"It...hurts..." was all Hiccup could manage to say. Toothless started pacing around Hiccup, frantic whining escaping his mouth. All eyes fix on a helmet pushing it's way through the crowd of people constantly shouting, 'move, out of the way, out!' Stoick, the chief, pushes his way out of the crowd and rushes over to Hiccup.

"Son, can you hear me?" Stoick said sternly, and when no response was received, just a dazed look, he turned to Astrid, "Astrid, what is happening?" Astrid just stared at him, shaking her head, only managing to squeak out a defeated, 'I don't know.' Stoick got up and rubbed his neck, trying to decide what to do next. Should he pick him up and take him home, should he leave him be, what? The crowd of people start to part as the village Elder and Svelta hurriedly make their way to Hiccup. As soon as they arrive, a snap was heard. All eyes fixate on Hiccup.

"So, much, pain!" Hiccup yelled. Another snap was heard and people could visibly see his hands slowly breaking and widening.

"What in Thor's name..." said Stoick as he slowly takes a step towards Hiccup. More snapping.

"H...Hiccup?" squeaked out Astrid. Snap. Hiccup raised his head, the daze gone from his eyes, just replaced with cold terror as he falls to the ground, shrieking in pain and agony. Snap, snap, crack. Hiccup starts flailing around, screaming. Stoick stepped back, shocked and unable to move. Astrid starting crying as she sunk to her knees, too scared to move. Toothless ran to Hiccup, moving around him, trying to find the source of the pain, frantically whining and roaring.

Snap.

Crack.

Stoic took another step back.

"By Thor's name...what is happening...to my son?" asked Stoick as he watches his son writhing in pain, his body slowly changing and morphing. Black scales start protruding from his body, wing bones suddenly burst from his back, spraying blood everywhere, and tail pushes its way out of the boy's lower back. Screaming, blood, and no one knew what to do. After a miserable few minutes, the screaming turned into roaring, and eventually that roaring died down. Everyone stood frozen. Everyone looked at Hiccup...at this...Night Fury.

## 2. Chapter 2

Hiccup slowly opened his eyes. Everything was blurry. He strained his ears but all he heard were muffled yelling.

\_ "Astrid...Dad...Toothless?" \_He wondered as his eyes slowly shift a bit to see Toothless standing in front of him defensively,  
\_ "I...what...happened...my head...my..body..I..can't feel my body."  
\_ Hiccup glanced back to Astrid and his Dad. His vision started to fade a bit, but soon returned, better than before. Now he was sure it was Astrid and his Father, but what were they saying. They were sure

yelling loud enough.

"Kill the Night Fury! Kill the Devil! Look at what he has done to my son!" Stoick yelled angrily. Astrid stood in his way using her body as a shield.

\_ "What, what, what is he talking about?" \_ Hiccup thought to himself,  
\_ "I feel...wet?" \_ He slowly shifted his head a bit and looked more over at Toothless who had gotten closer to Hiccup.

"Dad...no...get away from him," Hiccup managed to whisper out. All the fighting immediately ceased as all eyes turned to Hiccup. The shock and terror in their eyes startled Hiccup.

"What...what is it...?" asked Hiccup in a whisper. Something didn't feel right, but then he realized he had collapsed a few moments ago...or maybe it had been a while...he honestly didn't know. A large pit started to form in Hiccup's stomach.

"Son...can't you feel it? You...you aren't you anymore," said Stoick, lowering his battle axe to the ground, and gestured to all of him. Hiccup slowly drifted his gaze across the crowd, over a terrified Astrid, and into the eyes of an extremely worried Toothless. Why were they staring?

"All I can feel...is my head pounding," replied Hiccup as he struggled to lift his head, his whole body numb. He looked around again at the shocked faces staring at him. Hiccup could hear whispers going through the crowd.

\_ "He can \_\_\*\*talk\*\*\_\_?" \_

\_ "What does this mean?" \_

\_ "Is he \_\_\*\*cursed\*\*\_\_? I bet it's that \_\_\*\*unholy dragon's fault.\*\*" \_

\_ "Should we \_\_\*\*kill him\*\*\_\_? Put him out of his misery?" \_

\_ "Why is nobody questioning how \_\_\*\*he can talk\*\*\_\_?" \_

Hiccup's mind grew cloudy again. He shook his head a little to clear his mind. He felt that strange sensation again, more powerful than before. He finally looked down and around and saw a body...that wasn't quite his. Hiccup's eyes widened as he glanced over his whole body...the body of a Night Fury.

"W-what is this?" whispered out Hiccup. Hiccup frantically struggled to get up, falling over and over in the process, his numb body not allowing him to move.

"What is this!?" Hiccup kept shouting over and over again. Stoic took a few steps forward, raising his hand to Hiccup's head.

"Now son, please try to remain calm, and yes, I know what you're thinking, how can I remain calm?" said Stoick as he tried to calm his son. Hiccup started to gain control of his body a bit more and tried to run away from the whole scene. Of course, he only got a few feet before he fell again, landing with a small splash. Looking down, Hiccup noticed a large pool of blood that had surrounded the

area.

"My...me?" Hiccup whispered out and thought, "How could I lose so much blood and still be alive?" Hiccup stared at everyone, tears welling up and dripping down his face. "What have I become!?" He yelled at the onlookers. Toothless slowly approached Hiccup when Stoick stepped in between them.

"Oh no, you're not getting anywhere near him you blasted devil!" Stoick yelled. Hiccup took this opportunity to turn and run as far as he could, falling over himself as he got used to his new body.

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><p>Astrid watched as her friend ran off into the distance, falling over himself every twenty or so steps.</p>

"Oh my gods, what do we do?" Astrid asked herself. She felt a strong nudge in her back and turned to see a very worried Toothless.

"You want to go after him to, right?" asked Astrid. Toothless shook his head yes and motioned her to get on. Astrid bent down and faced Toothless, putting her hand on his nose.

"No, Toothless, I need to stay. I really want to go get Hiccup and make sure he is okay, but at the same time, I feel I'm the only one who will be able to stop Stoick from hurting you and maybe even Hiccup. Go, your friend needs you." She tried to keep back tears as Toothless nodded his head and took off after Hiccup. Astrid watched as yet another friend ran off into the wilderness, hoping they both return home safely. Astrid turned around and saw Stoick was too busy arguing with the other vikings to notice Toothless' absence...for now at least.

"Pull yourself together Astrid. You need to get the guys and explain what's going on, if they haven't already heard rumors," said Astrid and wiped away any traces of tears and gave herself a light slap on the cheek.

"Fishlegs must have some idea of what's going on," Astrid thought to herself and she turned and sprinted off towards Fishlegs' home. She'd be damned if she let anything happen to her friends.

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><p>Hiccup was sitting alone in the cove where he first met Toothless. He stared into the water at his reflection, contemplating what to do next. Too many possibilities clouded his mind, not to mention the shock of his current ordeal.</p>

"A Night Fury," Hiccup whispered out, "Why...a Night Fury...is...is this the secret of the Night Furies? Were they all once...human?" Hiccup stared into his reflection harder trying to recognize himself. He pulled himself away some and noticed a second reflection in the water next to him.

"What!?" yelled Hiccup as he jumped away from the water. He heard that familiar laugh and turned to see Toothless giving him that 'smile' of his. Hiccup glared at Toothless as his smile slowly faded away.

"You think this is funny? I'm a \_\*\*dragon\*\*\_! I don't know how this happened or what to do! How am I supposed to live my life? H-How am I supposed to be normal now looking like this! I finally had it good! People accepted me and now? I'm going to be cast out as a demon! I can never return home....," yelled Hiccup, tears streaming down his face. He slumped to the ground and started sobbing loudly. Toothless slowly approached Hiccup and sat down next to him, putting his wing over the smaller Night Fury's body.

"Hiccup, everything is going to be okay. I'm still here, I will protect you like I always did, and I'll still be your friend, like I always have been," Toothless said smoothly. Hiccup's sobbing stopped suddenly as he poked his head up from under his paws.

"I-I realize I'm a dragon, b-but the thought I might be able to understand you...never crossed my mind....," replied Hiccup with wide eyes still overflowing with tears. Toothless reached down and licked away the tears from his face and nuzzled him affectionately. Hiccup took a step or two back, retreating from the licks, shaking his head a bit to get the saliva from his face. Hiccup avoided eye contact with Toothless, keeping to himself as much as possible. Toothless could easily see this and remained where he was.

"You know, we have to go back. Stoick is your father, and he will love you no matter who or what you are...I mean, he still accepted you after you befriended me," said Toothless soothingly, trying his best to make sure Hiccup remained calm.

"No, he didn't, he disowned me and it only took a viking armada to be destroyed by the Red Death for him to realize his mistake. What's it gonna take this time?," Hiccup said monotonely.

"We won't know unless we go back and try to sort this whole thing out," Toothless said, as he brought himself closer to his friend. Hiccup just stared into the lake. Toothless couldn't make out what the smaller dragon was thinking, only that there was a great war raging inside his mind. Toothless took a few steps closer and licked Hiccup's head, trying his best to comfort him. Hiccup dropped his head low and rested himself on his paws.

"I know, bud. I just...what am I supposed to do...what to say?" wondered Hiccup out loud. Hiccup brought his tail around and curled into himself, as if trying to hide away from the world. Toothless looked down at his best friend, so worried for his well being. He is obviously depressed about this...whole ordeal and he needed time to accept it.

"We don't have to return right away. We could wait a day or two, let yourself rest, and hopefully, this will reverse, or I can at least try to make you happy about this whole...thing," whispered Toothless as he brought himself closer to Hiccup, trying to make him comfortable and happy. Hiccup closed his eyes for a few moments, breathed a heavy sigh, and opened them back up, staring into the small pond. He raised his head and stared at Toothless, who was a good head above him. Those bright emerald eyes full of worry, love, and comfort. Hiccup shuffled away from Toothless and stared off into the other direction.

"I...I think I'd like to wait a day or two," said Hiccup quietly.

Toothless nodded his head, relieved that he had helped some, and hopeful he could make his rider happy...well, his Night Fury happy.

"Then we wait," said Toothless comfortingly.

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><p>It had been a few hours and Hiccup hadn't moved from his spot staring at his reflection in the lake. Toothless had begun to worry watching his friend stare motionless at his reflection. The bigger Night Fury would go into the lake every so often and get some fish for himself and for Hiccup, which he would either slowly eat, or push it to the side. Toothless could only stand by as he watched silent tears fall into the lake, one drop after another. Everytime Toothless came close to him and try to comfort him, Hiccup would always ask him to leave saying he needed some time to think.</p>

\_ "I feel so useless. Here he is not moving and I don't know what to do," \_Toothless thought to himself. Dark clouds had formed above Berk which threatened its inhabitants with a heavy downpour. Thunder boomed throughout the sky as lightning peppered through forests on the other side of Berk.

"H..hey Hiccup, maybe we should head back, or at least take shelter in that cave over there. It looks like it's about to rain," said Toothless as he slowly approached his friend. Hiccup didn't move, just remained motionless fixated on his reflection.

"Hiccup?" Toothless asked as he slowly approached him, and Toothless noticed just how exhausted Hiccup looked, "Hiccup...Hiccup, talk to me, please." Toothless drew close to Hiccup and sat next to him, nudging him slightly with his nose. Hiccup sighed lowly and turned to face Toothless.

"Were you once a human? Is this...what I get for befriending you?" Hiccup asked, an exhausted look in his eyes. Toothless stared at his friend, scared that he is regretting becoming friends with him.

"Hiccup, no...no this isn't what you get for being my closest friend. No, I didn't used to be human...I was always a Night Fury...this is the first I've ever heard of it...let alone witness it," Toothless said, trying his best to make sure Hiccup was alright. Hiccup sighed again and turned back to his reflection. Toothless opened his mouth to say try and keep the conversation going, but no words came.

Drops started to fall all around them and in no time it was raining heavily. Still, Hiccup remained. Toothless lifted a wing and used it to shield Hiccup from the rain.

"Toothless, go into the cave already," Hiccup whispered out. Toothless stared down at the smaller Night Fury.

"I'm not going anywhere while you're out here in the rain," he said back sternly. Hiccup turned and gave Toothless an are-you-kidding-me face and then sighed heavily again.

"Keep sighing and you're gonna pass out," said Toothless jokingly, nudging Hiccup. Hiccup turned away from him and walked into the

nearest cave.

\_ "Well at least I got him out of the cold rain," \_Toothless thought to himself. Toothless turned and quickly caught up to Hiccup as he trudged into the opening of a small cave. Hiccup went to the back of the cave and layed down. Toothless grabbed a few sticks that were littered throughout the cave and set them in a bundle close to Hiccup and set them ablaze. Toothless glanced over and saw that Hiccup was already sound asleep.

"That was...fast," Toothless whispered to himself. He stretched himself out a bit before laying across the fire from where Hiccup was sleeping, curled in in a tight ball. Toothless continued to watch Hiccup as his chest rose and fell peacefully.

\_ "I want you to be alright. I can't imagine living without you...those days before I met you...living hell. You're my best friend Hiccup...I can't lose you," \_thought Toothless as he watched his friend sleeping. The subtle crackling of fire was enough to keep Toothless awake for a bit when he noticed that Hiccup was starting to whine and fidget in his sleep, seeming to have a nightmare. Toothless got up from his place and nuzzled up against Hiccup. Hiccup nuzzled his head into Toothless' shoulder.

\_ "Hopefully that will take away the bad dreams," \_Toothless thought as he put his wing over Hiccup, \_ "We just have to wait and see Hiccup. This could turn out to be something great...who knows. We could be closer than we were before...now that you can understand me." \_Toothless rested himself against Hiccup and waited for sleep to come, listening to the steady patter of rain outside their cave.

### 3. Chapter 3

Hiccup was jerked from sleep as loud thunder boomed throughout the night sky. The small cave was dimly lit by a dying fire in front of him. Hiccup tried to move when he realize he was nuzzled up against Toothless who had draped his wing over him. Hiccup stared at him, surprised by the situation.

\_ "Why...is he so close?" \_Hiccup thought to himself as he tried to wiggle himself free without waking Toothless. Once free, he looked down at his sleeping dragon friend, seeing how peaceful he looked.

\_ "At least one of us can sleep okay," \_ Hiccup thought to himself as he watched his friend reach around for him, and when he couldn't find Hiccup, he grabbed a large rock and cuddled against that instead. Hiccup turned around trying his hardest to stifle his laughter. Hiccup stood at the mouth of the cave, listening to the sounds of the dying rain. A sudden crack of thunder scared Hiccup, making him jump slightly.

"Er..ha? I'm still...relatively me...so I should be thankful for that," Hiccup whispered to himself. The rain had come to a stop after a few minutes and the clouds started to clear leaving a wide sky of stars above. Hiccup took a few cautious steps outside the cave as he stared at the sky. He was amazed by what he saw. With his new eyes, he could see what a dragon saw. A wide sky full of colors and lights

that a human could never see. Sparkling stars, passing comets, multiple colors that intertwined and created masterpieces in the heavens.

"This is so...beautiful," Hiccup whispered to himself as he sat himself down in front of the lake. He watched the stars glitter in the night sky for few minutes before he looked down at his reflection in the lake.

"This...is actually real," Hiccup said to himself, "I should be happy, somehow Astrid and Dad, and the others, they can still understand me...only the Gods know how that works. Toothless and I...we can actually talk now...not just a one-sided conversation." He looked back to the sky, that pit in his stomach lightening with each second that passed.

"This is completely insane," Hiccup said shaking his head slightly, "How does this even happen?" He turned around and headed back to the cave and stepped inside. Toothless was still cuddling up against a rock, drooling a bit over it.

\_ "Right now, I should be glad I have you bud," \_Hiccup thought to himself as he made his way over to Toothless. He pushed he rock away from Toothless slowly and slid next to him. Toothless reached out and grabbed the smaller Night Fury, brought Hiccup closer to him and draped his wing over him.

"You have a strong grip," Hiccup croaked out as he tried to relax some, "Just try to sleep Hiccup." He closed his eyes, and waited for sleep to come.

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><p>Toothless woke with a start. Hiccup was no longer beside him and he found himself cuddling a rock.</p>

"What?" Toothless said out loud as he stared at the rock. He pushed it away and got up to stretch, hearing pops and cracks throughout his body.

"Hiccup?" Toothless called out as he exited the mouth of the cave. He winced a bit from bright sun in his eyes and looked down. He looked back up and saw a figure in the lake, slowly creeping forward before pouncing with a loud splash. Toothless watched as Hiccup pranced about in the water making quite the show.

"Hiccup what are you doing?" asked Toothless, as he sat at the edge of the water. Hiccup quickly popped his head up with a fish in his mouth. Hiccup walked over to the shore a little ways away and put down the fish with a few others.

"Catching fish," said Hiccup as he crept back into the water. Toothless stared at him confused.

"Why?" Toothless asked as he walked over to the three fish Hiccup managed to catch. Hiccup stopped his fishing and walked back over to Toothless, and sat down next to him.

"I thought I could catch you some food before you woke up. You stayed by my side when I needed someone most," Hiccup said as he stared into

the sky. Toothless stared down at the smaller dragon, moving closer towards him and nudging him a bit.

"You didn't need to do this Hiccup," Toothless said smiling. He was so happy that Hiccup had done this for him, appreciated him. Hiccup looked at his smiling friend as smiled back.

"But I did anyway...well I at least tried," said Hiccup as he looked at the three fish he had caught. Toothless chuckled a bit and nudged Hiccup again.

"I'm guessing you've come to terms with this...whole thing," Toothless said as he gestured to all of Hiccup. Hiccup rolled his eyes at the common gesture.

"For now I guess. It's still very hard to believe, yet it's happening. I just have to wait and see, who knows, I might crack under all this," Hiccup said as he looked back towards the sky. Toothless looked as well, trying to decide what to say next.

"Let's face it, if we ever told anyone they'd laugh in our faces. I witnessed it, and you, well, lived it, so we are gonna have to get used to the fact," Toothless said quickly. Hiccup looked down at his reflection again, contemplating on his thoughts again. Toothless decided the subject should be left alone until a later time with the looks Hiccup was giving himself in the water.

"So, how long were you out here exactly?" Toothless asked. Hiccup looked at his reflection and made an irritated face.

"At least an hour," said an annoyed Hiccup. Toothless laughed and brought his wing around his friend, bringing him closer.

"At least you tried," said Toothless, licking Hiccup's head. Hiccup recoiled and fell to the ground and tried to rub off the saliva with his paws.

"Ew, Toothless!" Hiccup yelled rolling around on the ground. Toothless fell to the ground next to Hiccup, laughing hard. Eventually the laughing and the yelling died down as they both stared into the sunny sky, watching clouds roll by.

"We're going to have to go back sooner or later," Toothless whispered out, looking over to Hiccup. The smaller Night Fury fidgeted some, as if trying to get comfortable. Hiccup let out a short sigh and turned to Toothless.

"I know bud," He said before looking back to the sky. Toothless' gaze lingered a bit, watching his friend stare into the sky. A feeling flew within his chest for a moment before it left. Toothless turned back to the sky, wondering what he had felt just then. He shrugged it off and stared at the beautiful morning sky, happy just to be there.

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><p>"Ready? One, two, three!" Toothless shouted. He pushed his back up, feeling the weight leave his back before it returned down, popping his back in the process. He winced a bit at the pain, but pushed through it.</p>

"I didn't realize, that it would be so much trouble getting out of the cove!" Hiccup shouted down at Toothless, "This would be so much easier if we could both fly!" Toothless pushed up again and felt Hiccup leave his back, but not come back down. He looked up and saw a tail disappear over the edge and a head pop back over, staring down at him with his bright green eyes.

"You okay bud?" Hiccup asked, staring down at the Night Fury. Toothless shook himself and took a few steps back to get a running start.

"I'm fine," he said as he runs up and jumps to the top. Hiccup reach out with his paw and tried to grab onto Toothless to help hoist him up. After a few seconds of struggling, Toothless managed to pull himself up.

"Phew," Hiccup said, "You okay?" Toothless shook his head some and smiled at Hiccup.

"I'm fine, you ready?" Toothless asked. Hiccup looked towards the direction of the village. Toothless could see a troubled look in his eyes.

"We don't have to leave if you aren't re-"

"No, no I'm fine," Hiccup interrupted. He looked over at Toothless, giving me a reassuring smile. Toothless studied him for a bit, then smiled back.

"Alright Hiccup, then let's get going," He said, nudging Hiccup as they walked forward, taking their sweet time. Hiccup looked over at Toothless a little annoyed.

"What?" Toothless said with an amused smile on his face. Hiccup pushed against him hard

"Haha hey! What was that for?" Toothless asked, giving Hiccup a nudge back.

"That! Exactly that! You keep nudging me!" Hiccup said back with a smile on his face as he nudge into his friend. Toothless let out a loud laugh and nudged against Hiccup. The smaller Night Fury jumped onto Toothless and sent them both spiraling and rolling through the grass. They both came to a stop with Hiccup on top, staring down at Toothless.

"Ha! Looks like I win!" Hiccup said in a matter-of-factly voice. Toothless smirked and pulled Hiccup down and pinned teh smaller Night Fury to the ground.

"Oh really?" Toothless said, mocking him slightly. Hiccup wiggled and struggled under Toothless but eventually gave up.

"Okay fine, you win," Hiccup said, staring up at Toothless who smiled down at him. They both stayed there for a few moments, staring into each others eyes. Hiccup felt his chest pounding and felt his face turn 'red.'

\_ "Oh my gods, can dragons blush?"\_ Hiccup thought to himself,

\_ "Better question, why am I blushing? This is Toothless, why am I blushing!?" \_

\_ "Is he blushing?" \_ thought Toothless as he observed the smaller Night Fury's face scales slowly change to a light hint of blue. That same feeling flew through Toothless' chest again, this time it lingered a few moments before it disappeared. They both continued to stare at each other for a few awkward moments.

"So, uhm, you can get off me now?" Hiccup said, pushing a little against Toothless' hold. Toothless jumped off quickly.

"Sorry," he said as he backed up a foot or two. Hiccup quickly got to his feet, shaking himself to get any dirt off.

"Let's just stick to the plan and get back soon," Hiccup said as he continued walking towards the village, looking over his shoulder at Toothless, "You coming or what?" Toothless shook himself clean and caught to Hiccup.

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless and Hiccup came over the hill that overlooked Berk and slowly trailed down towards their home, being cautious not to be seen. Hiccup could hear the distant chatter of many people at the market and thought it was safe to assume they wouldn't be caught. The pair slowly approached their home and waited a few seconds. Toothless checked the area out before proceeding out of their cover. They approached the front door slowly, making sure not to draw attention to themselves.<p>

"Wait here a moment," Hiccup said quietly as he approached the door. Hiccup took a breath and knocked on the door. No response came. Hiccup pushed against the door lightly and it creaked open. The fire pit had died, leaving a pot dangling over the charred wood. Hiccup motioned for Toothless to come inside. They both looked around for any sign of life, but found the house vacant. Toothless approached the pot over the fire and gave it a good sniff.

"I don't think he's back since yesterday," Toothless said. He glanced around the room, and sniffed the air. Stoick's scent was faint. Hiccup returned from upstairs and reported the same.

"I don't know if we should risk going out like this, bud," said Hiccup as he closed the front door. He walked over to the fire pit and threw a few logs into the pit.

"Can you light this for us?" Hiccup asked quietly, a little embarrassed to ask. Toothless quickly lit the fire and positioned himself next to Hiccup. The smaller Night Fury looked a bit hesitant, but went ahead with the question.

"How exactly...do I spit fire like that?" Hiccup asked trying to avoid eye contact with Toothless. The bigger Night Fury chuckled a bit.

"You just gotta feel it Hiccup!" Toothless said sarcastically, and laughed. Hiccup pushed himself against Toothless angrily.

"That doesn't help at all! Stop laughing and tell me!" said an

annoyed Hiccup. Both of their ceased their bickering when they heard footsteps approaching the house. A sudden stop at the door and a deep sigh came from the other side. The handle fidgeted before a large figure appeared through the doorway, no doubt, Stoick. He took his helmet off and set it on the hook next to the doorway. He turned and froze at the sight of the two Night Furies.

"Dad?" Hiccup asked, "Dad, please remain calm. I can explain this...okay, I can't explain this but," Hiccup trailed off as he noticed his father slowly backing out of the house. The back door burst open as many viking men flooded the room. Toothless and Hiccup froze, not sure of what to do. One of the vikings tackled Toothless to the ground while another swung a mace into the bigger Night Fury's head, essentially knocking him out.

"Toothless!" Hiccup shouted, trying to reach through the mob of men when he felt hands pulling him back, "Dad let go! Stop! Don't hurt him please!" All the struggling soon left as Hiccup felt a hard smack on his head. He grew dizzy as the world swirled around him and faded to black.

\_ "Please...don't...hurt...him..." \_

\_ "Please...Stoick...don't hurt your son..." \_

#### 4. Chapter 4

Astrid watched from her bedroom window as she saw men hauling Toothless off into the distance. When she was sure no one was watching, she hopped down onto the street below and tailed the men. As she crossed through the market, she coughed loudly twice before continuing on her way. She kept her eye behind her, making sure Snotlout got the message, and sure enough, he initiated his part of the plan. Snotlout was crucial as his father was within Stoick's inner circle and was to be an overseer of Toothless. The young dragon rider scratched his head and 'accidently' pushed his helmet off, landing to the ground with a loud metallic clank. Fishlegs saw the scene from his bedroom window and walked casually down the stairs to his mother cooking dinner.

"I'm going out mother, I'll be back before dinner," said Fishlegs as he waved to his mother. She smiled at her son and motioned to the hooks next to the back door.

"Don't forget your bag, just incase things get rough," she said with a wink. Fishlegs nodded and grabbed the small bag and headed out the door. He slammed the door shut, and walked towards the market. Ruffnut heard the signal and motioned to Tuffnut. They both exchanged grins as they took off into the sky with their Zippleback. The duo flew towards the harbor and started wreaking havoc in their own usual twinly manner which drew in an angry crowd of onlookers. The market quickly died out as worried vikings made their way towards the sounds of destruction. Taking advantage of the situation, Astrid, Fishlegs, and Snotlout made their get away unnoticed.

The trio used the growing darkness to hide their advances towards the Dragon Academy. Astrid took the lead as she kept a close eye on the men making their way with an unconscious Toothless in their grip.

Fishlegs had the center, where he ran multiple scenarios in his head and made sure they had their way out of the situation. Snotlout took up the rear. He was tasked with making sure they were not being followed and to provide a distraction in case of being caught. Astrid brought up her hand and motioned for them to stop. She strained her eyes to the distance where the small team of men had taken Toothless.

"It looks like they put him in the cages where we used to keep the dragons. Two of them are standing at the entrance, probably going over security details. The other two are in the cell restraining Toothless. I don't understand why Stoick assigned only a few men to this," Astrid whispered back to Fishlegs. He looked down to his finger and counted down from six and reached into his bag.

"Okay, Snotlout," Fishlegs said and handed him a small sack of water, "Water yourself down some, you need to look like you just ran here top speed." Snotlout took the water sack from Fishlegs, eyeing it with a questioned look.

"And why do I need to do that?" Snotlout said as he opened the leather container. Fishlegs motioned for them to come in closer. Astrid rolled her eyes but did so anyway.

"Snotlout, I need to you run up to your father and tell him there is trouble in the village and that it could be an Outcast attack. He will likely respond quickly and will probably leave on his own, if we are lucky, with the other man standing guard. If it does come down to you and another viking Snotlout, wait for the right opportunity to take him out. Since your father is in charge of this small unit, it will be good for us to get him out of the way. Now, Astrid, that's where you come in," Fishlegs explained, motioning to Astrid, "Once we have entrance, all of us will enter, with you in the lead. We will hang back while you take out the remaining guards. What you'll need to do is walk straight in." Astrid gave him an irritated look.

"What do you mean, just 'walk straight in'?" responded an annoyed Astrid. Fishlegs motioned a finger to his mouth, telling her to keep it down. She cupped a hand over her mouth and checked to make sure no one had heard. When the coast was clear, she motioned back to Fishlegs.

"They will immediately know something is up and approach you quickly and with conviction. Be oblivious to the situation and keep a charade going that you don't quite know what's going on. That will aggravate them some, I'm sure. Snotlout and I will get behind them and take them out while they're bickering among themselves. We won't have long before more men arrive to aid the security detail. Stoick is smarter than to keep a small four man team keeping watch over a dragon, a Night Fury to add to that," Fishlegs explained and brought out paper to write out separate scenarios for the situation, "He is a small sheet for both of you incase things backfire or deviate from what I imagine." He handed both the young vikings their slips of paper and small blunt weapons before motioning the plan into action.

Snotlout poured water onto himself and jogged a bit in place. He moved from his hiding spot, careful to keep concealed until he found a good position to appear from. He jumped from the bushes, a frantic look on his face as he ran to his father at the gate. The other viking pointed to Snotlout. His father quickly whipped around, an

angered look on his face.

"Snotlout, what are you doing here?" Spitelout yelled at his son. Snotlout stopped short in front of him, pretending to catch his breath.

"It it it its the Outcasts! They've overrun harbor and are making their way inward. I don't know how much longer we can hold them off!" Snotlout said, pointing the direction of the village. Distant flames could be seen flaring into the darkening sky. Spitelout's mouth fell open as he pushed his way past his son.

"Johan, stay put! If things get rough, I'm sending someone back for you!" Spitelout shouted as he ran off into the distance. Johan looked down at Snotlout and back at the retreating back of Spitelout. Snotlout took this opportunity to kick him in the crotch, bringing him to his knees before he gave him a swift punch to the face, effectively rendering him unconscious. Snotlout held up two fingers, which signaled the remaining two young dragon riders to come. Astrid lead the trio into the darkened Academy, she motioned for the two to take cover behind a weapons rack near the entrance to the cell holding Toothless. Astrid approached the two remaining guards, making sure she made her presence known. The two quickly approached her, assaulting her with questions.

"Young lady, do you have any idea how much trouble you are in?"

"Astrid, go home!"

The girl looked at both of them confused and took a step back, acting a bit scared.

"Look, look, I'm just here to get my axe I left," Astrid said, pointing over to a weapons rack. While the pair of guards both looked over at the rack, Fishlegs and Snotlout moved in and knocked them both out. Astrid opened the cage and ran to Toothless. It wasn't a pretty sight. small cuts trailed across his face, his back was treated the same only with larger cuts. Astrid gasped at the sight, quickly checking the dragon for any serious wounds.

"Oh my gods Toothless, what did they do to you?" She said. She put your hand on the dragon's nose, and felt his slow breathing. Fishlegs entered the cell and pulled a knife out of his back to cut any ropes that restrained the Night Fury. After that was through, he pulled out a lockpick to take off the heavy chains. He pulled them to the side and motioned to Astrid.

"Snotlout, get in here and help us carry him out," Fishlegs called out in a hushed tone. Footsteps were heard entering the cell. Astrid rubbed Toothless' nose when she felt a hard thwack over her head.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup felt himself moving as he slowly woke from his unconscious state. He tried to move his head around but felt himself restrained. He pulled and struggled against chains keeping him restrained to a table. He looked forward and saw his father in front of him. He looked around him as much as he could and saw viking men carrying him up on a large wooden board. Stoick, hearing the chains rattling,

looked back and smiled at his son.<p>

"Well it looks like you woke up just in time," Stoick said as he motioned towards the Dragon Academy, "We're almost at our destination." Hiccup tried to talk, but his mouth was being muzzled down with leather straps. His father noticed this and his smile slowly faded. He let out a deep sigh and walked back, unmuzzling his son. Hiccup shook away the straps and stared at his father's back as they continued to move forward.

"Where's Toothless?" asked Hiccup in a worried tone. Stoick didn't respond, but looked forward, picking up the pace some.

"What's at the Academy? Dad, why am I chained up?" Hiccup asked his father. Stoick didn't respond to any questions Hiccup threw at them until they reached the Academy. He motioned for men carrying Hiccup to set him down next to his Chief chair overlooking the once dragon slaying training grounds. He bent down next to his son and motioned over towards a cell at the far wall.

"I was going to make this a private event, but your friends decided to join the party regardless," Stoick said, and yelled out commands to the vikings below. They brought out Astrid, Fishlegs, and Snotlout in chains and set them in the center of the arena. Fishlegs and Snotlout looked at Hiccup with open mouths, trying to take in the scene before them.

"I knew he was weird, but this is something else," whispered Snotlout to Fishlegs. Fishlegs nodded and motioned towards Hiccup.

"I've never read that in the dragon manual before," whispered Fishlegs. Stoick heard the duo and yelled at them, telling to keep quiet. Both the boys looked down quickly. Astrid remained concentrated on the ground in front of her.

"Bring out the Night Fury!" Stoick's voice rang out. Several viking men opened the center former dragon cell and brought out Toothless who was struggling against his chains.

"Toothless! What did they do to you bud?" Hiccup shouted. Hiccup could see the multiple cuts covering the bigger Night Fury's body. Hiccup looked on in horror, wondering how his father could have let this happen.

"Dad, what did you do to him?" Hiccup shouted in distress. Stoick looked over to his distressed son, confused.

"I gave him a little pain, son. He was the reason you suffered and screamed in agony for several long minutes, and I can't let that go unpunished," Stoick said with a dark look on his face. Hiccup didn't know who he was looking at anymore. The man he knew, the father he trusted, the Chief he looked up too, he wasn't there anymore.

"Dad, how could you do this...this...this isn't you!" Hiccup said to his father. His father looked away, an ashamed look in his eyes.

"I had your best interests in my heart Hiccup! Having that dragon around already cost you a foot! What else was he going to take away from my boy?" yelled Stoick, his anger growing. Hiccup looked at him in disgust.

"And what have we gained? Dragons and Vikings co-existing together, in harmony! We defended Berk against the against any threat that was thrown our way! We learned so much from them! All the violence and hate we held in our hearts as Vikings dissipated each day the dragons were here dad! They've done so much to help us! They've done so much and opened our eyes, my eyes! Where did this all come from?" yelled Hiccup at his father who took no time to respond.

"It came from the curse that my son was burdened with because he befriended the unholy offspring of lighting and death itself!" Stoick said as he raised his hand, signaling a large and scary looking viking to position himself next to Toothless who could only look on in silence as a muzzle kept him from making any sounds besides low whines. The viking who currently stood to Toothless' side wielded a large axe, holding it over his shoulder. Hiccup struggled against his restraints, screaming and roaring.

"Dad what are you doing?" Hiccup yelled in distress. Stoick looked down at his son, giving him a hard look.

"The Elder gave me her wisdom. She said that to break his unholy curse, we need to kill the dragon that set it in place, and for the victim to witness the dragon's death," Stoick said monotonically. A large pit formed in Hiccup stomach as he stared wide-eyed at his father.

"Woah, Chief, you can't do this!" yelled Fishlegs as he struggled against his cuffs.

"Stoick what are you thinking?" yelled Stoick's nephew Snotlout, "Do you even care what Hiccup thinks?" Stoick glared down at the young dragon riders, effectively shutting them up.

"I do what is best for my boy, nothing less!" Stoick's voice boomed around the arena. Toothless looked on, his pupils becoming slits as his aggression rose, struggling against his metal restraints. Astrid kept quiet the entire time, working a lockpick into her cuffs, and lucky for her, Stoick yelled as she heard her cuffs make a 'click' as they unlock.

\_ "If anything happens, Toothless, Hiccup, I'm here to stop it," \_ Astrid thought to herself as she stared at the executioner, ready to take action if necessary.

"This isn't what I want! The safest place for me is with Toothless dad! Don't do this!" screamed Hiccup, scared out of his mind. Stoick, looked away, afraid he'll lose his nerve if he makes eye contact with Hiccup. Stoick raised his hand and pulled it down quickly, signaling for the executioner to commence. He lined up his axe and slowly raised it.

\_ "Okay Hiccup, fire!" \_ Hiccup quickly tried to make himself spit a plasma blast. Nothing happened as the axe went higher and higher

\_ "Oh my gods, hurry, hurry! He's been there since the beginning for you, don't let him down!" \_ Hiccup pushed harder and harder, feeling a spark ignite in front of him. The executioner reached his peak and was going to swing down at any moment. Toothless closed his eyes with

a whine and accepted his fate. Astrid made her move, trying to reach Toothless in time, screaming as she ran along.

"No, no, no! No!" Hiccup screamed as he saw the axe swing down, "This can't happen!"

## 5. Chapter 5

All eyes turned to Hiccup. He glared down at the executioner as a trail of smoke escaped his mouth. The executioner's axe had found its way into the dragon cell, the handle completely obliterated, leaving only the axe head protruding from the concrete wall. Astrid was a few feet from where the blast was aimed as she stared at the small Night Fury, mind buzzing with fear as she saw Hiccup give a glare harsher than she'd ever seen.

"This...can never...happen..." Hiccup loudly said. He turned to his father who had a dumbfounded look on his face, taken aback by the hostility in his son's eyes. Hiccup struggled against his restraints, eventually pushing himself off the edge of the perch, smashing the wooden board against the ground which weakened it just enough for Hiccup to pull himself free. The now unrestrained Night Fury slowly made his way over to his dragon companion and watched as the executioner quickly backed away. Hiccup gestured to Astrid.

"Come help me with these restraints," Hiccup said as he bit down on some rope, ripping it apart. Astrid stood there a moment, intimidated to approach Hiccup, but decided to help her friend regardless. Toothless hadn't moved a muscle, continuing to stare at Hiccup as he tried to undo his restraints. A loud thump was heard as Stoick jumped down from his perch. Hiccup whipped around in a defensive position, ready to defend Toothless from any attack his father might throw at them. Stoick was taken a bit off guard at the intensity of his son's glare. Of course he knew his son would be absolutely pissed off, but this was a face he had never seen before coming from his son. The Chief stopped where he was a looked at the scene. His son, who had been cursed by whatever god or goddess and transformed him into a Night Fury. A Night Fury by blood who protected his son with his life, restrained and put to death, beaten and tortured. A young viking girl who kept a third eye on him as she undid the restraints, who no doubt felt like fish out of water. Two viking boys who made their way to either side of Hiccup to provide defense for Toothless, regardless that they were both cuffed behind their backs. The full realization of what he had almost done hit him harder than anything before. Stoick's stomach churned a typhoon. His head felt dizzy and light. The world around him came crashing down as his blindness wore away, revealing the destruction this monster of a man had left in his wake.

\_ "He really loves that dragon,"\_ Stoick thought to himself, \_ "Loves him to the point that he'll remain like this for the rest of his life if it means he can be by his side. His great friends Fishlegs, Astrid, and his brat of a cousin Snotlout stood by his side till the end."\_ Stoick took a step back and breathed a deep, low sigh. He turned around and left the Academy as he felt several watchful eyes burn into the back of his head. How was he going to make up for this one?

\_ "No,"\_ Stoick thought to himself, \_ "There is no making this one

up."—

When Hiccup was sure his father had left he quickly turned around and stared face to face with his Night Fury friend. Toothless stared back at him with his emerald eyes full of amazement and wonder. Hiccup leaned into Toothless' shoulder and took a moment to fully appreciate him, that he was alive and safe. Toothless nuzzled his head against Hiccup as he felt his shoulder dampen. He could faintly hear the quiet crying of Hiccup, growing louder each passing second.

"I promise...I promise to keep you safe..." Hiccup whispered out, failing to keep his composure and slumped back, sitting on his hind legs as he tried to keep his noise to a minimal. Toothless breathed an internal sigh of relief as Astrid took off the chain muzzle which had kept him quiet the entire time, and picked the last of the locks, releasing the Night Fury. Toothless jumped from his spot and landed next to Hiccup, pushing his head against the smaller dragon's.

"And I promise to keep you safe too Hiccup," Toothless whispered back and licked his head affectionately. Toothless felt the feeling in his chest once again, this time, it stayed for a while as if living in the moment. The dragon wondered to himself where this feeling came from and why it would pop like this when he was with Hiccup.

The trio of vikings looked on as Astrid picked the locks of the remaining two. Astrid decided to break the awkward silence and approach the two Night Furies. She looked down as she approached Hiccup.

"We're sorry...we are so sorry Hiccup. We failed you and Toothless and almost got him killed," Astrid said loudly and quickly. The two boy vikings looked down or away and avoided all eye contact with Hiccup. Hiccup walked closer to Astrid and brought her eyes up to meet his. Hiccup pulled her into a hug with one paw, holding her close.

"Astrid, I could never have asked for better friends. Never apologize, don't you guys ever apologize," Hiccup said to them with strong emotions flooding into his voice. Fishlegs and Snotlout let out relieved sighs and congratulated themselves on a 'job well done.' A flapping in the distance and yelling signaled the approach of the twins. They burst onto the arena floor and had their Ziplineback spew gas and flames every direction.

"Ruffnut and Tuffnut here to save the day!" they screeched in unison. The group below them stared with the usual looks of annoyance and aggravation. The twins stared at them back with blank expressions.

"What," asked Tuffnut as he stared at the group.

"Uh, did we miss something," asked Ruffnut as she jumped off her dragon. Astrid brought a palm up to her face as Fishlegs groaned loudly.

"You guys are so useless! Toothless could have been dead by now!" Snotlout yelled at the twins.

"Hey, it wasn't my fault she needed to stop every five seconds for a potty break," Tuffnut said, pointing over at his sister. She glared

at him, yelling obscene things at him.

"Uh, that was you!" she yelled back as the two got into a heated argument over nothing. The group stared on in annoyance as the two bickered.

"Enough already!" Hiccup yelled at them. The two immediately stopped and stared at smaller Night Fury. Tuffnut jumped off of his dragon's head and landed next to Ruffnut. He nudged her slightly and motioned for her to say something. She blinked quickly a few times, but took a few steps forward.

"Woah! So he can talk!" Ruffnut said getting closer to Hiccup, "Talking dragons are hot." She smiled and winked at him. Hiccup took a step or two back, disgusted and creeped out by the odd gesture.

"Uh thanks," Hiccup said slowly and backed up towards Toothless. He accidentally bumped into the bigger Night Fury, eliciting a sharp gasp of pain from him. Hiccup whipped around, guilt rippling through his chest.

"I'm so sorry Toothless! I didn't even think about it! You must be in so much pain, we gotta get you to Svelta, she'll have something to give you I'm sure!" Hiccup said quickly and loudly. The vikings looked on as they heard Hiccup yelling in Toothless' face while the bigger Night Fury had a very amused look on his face.

"Hiccup slow down, you're gonna pass out," Toothless said and licked his friend's face. Hiccup recoiled and fell to the ground, trying to wipe the saliva off.

"Ew, Toothless!" Hiccup yelled out. The change of pace to some normality amused the young vikings, laughing along with Toothless as Hiccup gave them an annoyed look.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup and Toothless broke away from the group as they headed back towards their home. Hiccup was taking deep breaths, very worried, nervous, and scared about confronting his father again. Toothless stole a glance at Hiccup.</p>

"Hey. Calm down, everything will be okay, you'll see," Toothless said. Hiccup closed his eyes and nodded his head to remain positive. He looked over at his friend who was covered with green paste to keep the bleeding down and help him heal properly.

"I still feel guilty about all this...like it was my fault you got hurt," Hiccup whispered out. Toothless stopped where he was and stared at his friend. Hiccup noticed his abrupt stop and turned around to face him.

"Hiccup..." Toothless whispered out, "Please...please don't blame yourself for something that was beyond your control." Toothless got up and nudge his head against Hiccup's. Hiccup backed away a bit from the gesture, but got the message.

"Thanks...bud," Hiccup whispered out as they approached the door. Hiccup sat and stared at the door for a few moments.

"Wait out here a moment," Hiccup said as he slowly entered the house. The fire pit crackled when Hiccup entered the home. It was warm and smelled heavily of alcohol. He could easily see his father resting in his favorite chair, a giant mug full of strong beer in his right hand. Hiccup slowly approached the pit and sat across from his drunken father. Stoick put down his mug and leaned in close to the fire.

"Every decision I've made up until this point has only caused you pain. I neglected you as a child, thinking you were a burden to the village. I forced you into the dragon arena, knowing full well you could be hurt. I pushed you away and disowned you when I found out you were training dragons. It only took your near death experience and loss of a leg for me to regret everything I'd ever done. I always thought I knew what was best for my son and I could have never been more wrong. I almost killed Toothless, the dragon I grew to trust with my life, with your life," Stoick said as Hiccup listened intently, "I nearly caused you so much pain and suffering without hearing your opinions. This time...this time I can't ask for forgiveness. I can't ask for you to trust me again. I can't ask you to call me dad anymore. I can't beg for you to stay and be my son. I can't do anything. This time...this time I went too far." Stoick leaned back into his chair and stared absently into the fire. Hiccup remained quiet for a few long minutes as he stared into the crackling fire.

"You're still my dad, and you always will be, no matter what," Hiccup started off, "but this isn't something I can just forget, or forgive so easily. What you almost did today is going to stay with me the rest of my life, knowing that you'll kill the friends who are closest to me because you feel you need to...for my best interests. It's going to take a long while before my trust for you builds back up...and right now...I don't really know what to think of you. I mean, I don't even feel safe living under the same roof as you. Back there, I hardly recognized the man who ignored my screams of terror and ordered innocent blood to be spilled. I...I hardly recognize you now. You..you're just some stranger who has my dad's face, his voice. I don't...I don't know how we'll be able to fix this. A line was crossed that never should have been. If it were the old you, back in those days where we 'killed or be killed,' I wouldn't be the least bit shocked, but for you to turn around and do this now? Where did these last few months go? Where did the love for that Night Fury go? Did you keep all that hate buried inside you until this happened? What made you so afraid that you'll kill someone so close to you?" Stoick slammed his fist against the arm chair.

"I was afraid that I'd lost the only family I have left! I lost your mother, and nearly you so many times! I was petrified by the thought that this dragon could have lied to you from the start and waited for the best moment to do this! Your screams were filled with so much agony, more than I'd ever heard any beast make! You layed in pool of your own blood, enough blood to kill a man three times over and hearing your scared screaming as you looked down at your body. Seeing that was enough to send even the strongest of fathers over the edge! Having to sit idly by while your son screams out with so much pain filling his voice, knowing that he is suffering on a completely new level and not being able to do a single thing! You ran off into the woods for an entire day and a half leaving me behind to watch as viking men cleaned up the blood! The stain is still there Hiccup!"

That awful blood stained the ground reminding me everyday of the pain you had felt!" Stoick yelled at his son.

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless didn't have to strain his ears much as he heard their entire conversation blast through the door. Astrid had arrived during the middle of Stoick's talk of being a horrible parent. She sat down next to Toothless and listened to their heated argument going on inside.</p>

"Things probably won't go back to the way they were before," Astrid whispered over to Toothless. She looked up and saw the emotions flooding through Toothless' eyes. She could read him like a book, even better than Hiccup could. She smiled a bit and punched him lightly. Toothless looked down at her confused.

"You love him don't you?" Astrid said as she stood back up to face the dragon. Toothless looked away, shocked and confused at the same time. Astrid picked up these mixed emotions and continued on.

"So you don't even know yourself," Astrid said, putting her hand on her hip, "You know deep down you've always loved him, but now that he's, well, a dragon, these feelings are finally coming to surface." Toothless looked at her, amazed at what she could tell from a single look. She patted his nose and gave him a smile.

"It's not going to be easy. The way Hiccup brushes off your subtle displays of affection means he either isn't interested, or he is just as confused as you are," Astrid said as she leaned against the Night Fury. She could feel the strong rhythm of Toothless' heart surging through her body. "Life is already difficult enough with him being a Night Fury. He's going to get some negative attention from certain vikings. He's going to get hurt, and we are all going to need to be there for him. We need to be here for both of you guys. As we saw from Stoick, people are going to be convinced that Hiccup is cursed and you are to blame so life here isn't going to be easy for a while." Toothless slowly slumped to the ground, and Astrid did the same, laying against the Night Fury's stomach.

"As for this relationship between you two? Most vikings know that gender-strict companionship doesn't apply in the dragon community, so that part wouldn't be shocking. It would be for Hiccup however. He's a viking and vikings are expected to be tough and manly. I'm just going to assume you'll be the dominant one, I mean it's Hiccup after all. Your life is going to remain unchanged in the public eye. Hiccup as the submissive one will be viewed as an unmanly, weak, and disgraceful one in the relationship. That's how it used to be, I mean, times have changed and people have gotten over it. Just look at Gobber, no one cares about him anymore, so we should just keep our fingers crossed that nobody will care about your relationship if anything ever happens there. Just, be careful with what you guys do. Some of the village already thinks poorly of you from this situation," Astrid said. She was about to continue on when house door slowly opened and Hiccup walked out. Astrid and Toothless jumped to their feet and gave him their full attention.

"So...how did it go?" Astrid asked as the door behind him closed. Hiccup sighed heavily and looked at both of them.

"It's a start," said Hiccup, "Time is what's best for now. Right now, the man that lives in that house is my chief, nothing more or less. Hopefully over time we can go back to being a happy family again, but, I can't live in the same house as that man constantly scared that he'll do something to you bud." Toothless looked away guilty.

"Then stay and live with him Hiccup. I'll find some place safe to stay, like at Fishlegs or Astrid's house," Toothless said to Hiccup. Hiccup widened his eyes in surprise and shook his head in complete disagreement. Astrid looked on confused.

"What? What did he say?" Astrid asked. Hiccup looked at her and back to Toothless, a defiant look in his eye.

"No, you aren't going anywhere without me. I would never be able to get sleep constantly worrying about you, and knowing you, it'd be the same story on your end," Hiccup said sternly to Toothless. The bigger Night Fury felt a sudden surge of happiness flood through him hearing Hiccup say that. He nodded his head slowly, the guilt slowly leaving his eyes.

"Where are you two going to stay then Hiccup? There are a few empty houses just recently built near the market, but, would you two even be safe in town?" asked Astrid. Hiccup looked down and felt a wave of sadness overtake him.

"We could always try to live down at the cove," Hiccup whispered out. Toothless could feel the sorrow radiating off of his friend and he could understand his sadness. Leaving behind life in the village for living out of the way in the dense forest. Relationships with his friends would suffer as he wouldn't see them that much. Loud footsteps emanated from the Haddock household as Stoick pushed open the door. He stared at the trio, a determined look on his face.

"Oh no your not. You are staying right here in town, where you belong. If anyone so much as gives you a glare," Stoick said, "I may hold the record for World's Worst Dad, but this is a start at being a better parent. I look after my family, whether its Hiccup, Toothless, or my son's friends." Stoick waved and gestured to the trio. Hiccup gave his father a short look of gratitude and nodded his head.

"Thank you chief," Hiccup said before he turned and walked away towards the market with Astrid and his Night Fury companion, leaving his father's heart crushed hearing his son refer to him so distantly.

## 6. Chapter 6

Gobber led the two bag carrying Night Furies and Astrid to a vacant home near the edge of the market with a good view of village as it descends down into the harbor. The area was unusually quiet and desolate for that time of day with very few people seen as they made their way to the house. Astrid noticed that behind them, windows and doors slowly opened as vikings peeked out of their homes to get a glance at the passing dragons. Astrid turned around and kept walking. She debated on saying something when she noticed both the dragons swiveling their ears ever so slightly to catch the whispers that were said behind them. Astrid felt a sharp knife of sadness pierce her

chest knowing her friends were going to have a difficult time in the coming weeks, maybe months, who knows, some people may never get used to it.

"We're here," Gobber said as he stopped, pulling Astrid from her thoughts. The house was fairly decent, a little wear on the wood, but nothing too bad. Hiccup stared at the house and Astrid could see the several emotions going across his face. Sadness, Hate, Grief, Regret, Forgiveness, Excitement, before his emotions stopped on Happiness.

"I love it," Hiccup said as he nudged Toothless. The bigger Night Fury nodded his agreement and motioned for the group to go inside and have a look. Astrid was caught a little off guard as the house certainly seemed bigger on the inside. It had a decent sized living room that could easily fit the two Night Furies, a small kitchen area, not that they'll be using it much anyway, and two rooms, one of the bottom floor and another on the top, both big enough to fit either dragon comfortably. Hiccup sat up on his hind legs, dropping the few bags of his belongings as he observed every small detail in the house.

"It's a pretty nice place you've got here," Astrid said, nudging Hiccup. He looked down at Astrid, giving her small smile. He turned to Toothless who was already staring in his direction.

"I like it," Toothless said with a smile. Hiccup nodded and said his thanks to Gobber for showing them the place.

"Anytime Hiccup, stop by the shop if you two ever need anything," Gobber said as he left the house. Toothless made his way over to the fire pit, placed his bags to the side and lit the few sticks that were in the fire.

"They didn't give us much wood to work with huh?" Hiccup said as he turned to leave, "Try not to destroy the house while I'm gone." With that, Hiccup waved the two goodbye as he headed into the market to fetch some fire wood.

\* \* \*

><p>Astrid and Toothless were left alone in the house as they watched the smaller Night Fury's tail disappear behind the door. Astrid approached Toothless and sat next to him, both sitting in a silence, enjoying each others company. Toothless had started to feel at ease around Astrid. She could understand what he is feeling without a word having to be uttered on his end.</p>

"You gonna tell him anytime soon," Astrid asked. Toothless looked up at the door, as if expecting Hiccup to come back at any second. Astrid chuckled a little bit and lightly punched Toothless' arm.

"He won't be back for a while. He may be a dragon, but he's still Hiccup," Astrid said, smiling a bit. Toothless looked over at her and shook his head.

"What? Why? Don't tell me your scared?" Astrid asked, mocking him only slightly. Toothless hit her playfully over the head with his wing.

"Hey!" Astrid said, laughing a bit to lighten the mood. She leaned back as she gazed into the fire. She could see Toothless was lost at what to do next.

"The way he looks at you, the way he treats you, it's different from everyone else. That was one of the reasons I called it off so early on. I could see a bond between you two that him and I just didn't have. At the time, I just thought it was your friendship that kept you guys joint at the waist, but now that he's a dragon, I see a completely different side to it," Astrid said quietly. Toothless stared at her, his chest thumping thinking about Hiccup with another person, and at the same time, thumping thinking about the time he's spent together with Hiccup. Astrid sighed a bit and looked over at Toothless.

"You need to tell him soon while you still have the chance," Astrid said, getting up from her place, "Don't take the time you have with him for granted." With that, she exited the house, leaving Toothless alone with his thoughts and day dreams.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup walked through the crowded market which started to quiet down as he made his way to the stall farthest to the end. He could hear quiet whispers going around the market as the stall made its way into his view. Hiccup breathed a short sigh of relief as Snotlout was stuck running the stall again. Snotlout looked on the verge of falling asleep from boredom. Hiccup chuckled to himself some as he stood in front of the stall, the boy completely unaware of his presence. Hiccup hid down below the view of the stall and poked at Snotlout with his tail.</p>

"Wha?" Snotlout said as he shot up from his half conscious state as he looked for the person who woke him from his 'short' nap. Hiccup laughed a bit as he popped his head up from the bottom of the stall. Snotlout rolled his eyes and sighed.

"What do \_you \_want Hiccup?" Snotlout asked, not amused by his cousin's antics. Hiccup motioned for a few logs of firewood behind Snotlout to which he unenthusiastically obliged.

"I uh, moved out from my dad's. Kinda why I came here for wood," Hiccup almost whispered out. Snotlout stopped for a moment, still looking at the logs before continuing gathering a few of them. He turned around and put four good sized logs on the table for Hiccup.

"How are you going to carry those exactly?" Snotlout asked. Hiccup stared at him and just laughed.

"I didn't think this far ahead," Hiccup replied as he laughed at himself. Snotlout groaned and helped Hiccup carry the logs back to his home. Snotlout noticed all the people who were staring. Whispers flew around the market quickly, hushed tones, small gasps, and an occasional insult towards the Night Fury. Snotlout wondered how his cousin could even deal with all the negative attention, everyone staring and making fun of him. Then it hit, this is how things used to be before the Red Death. Granted not as bad, but still pretty bad.

"Your still the same annoyin Hiccup to me," Snotlout said suddenly, trying to cheer Hiccup up in his own special way. Hiccup nodded, a small smile formed as he held two logs in his mouth. They approached the house and set the wood off to the side, getting a place set up for when more wood is needed.

"Thanks for the help Snotlout," Hiccup said, grateful. Snotlout juts waved his hand slightly over his head to signal he had heard. Hiccup turned to face the door, but stopped short of opening it when he heard the conversation being heard.

"You need to tell him soon while you still have the chance," he heard Astrid's muffled voice say through the door. He heard footsteps drawing closer to the door as he hid around the corner. Astrid stepped outside and took one last long look at Toothless before walking over into the market. Hiccup stood there for a few moments, thinking to himself.

\_ "Tell him soon? Tell me what?" \_Hiccup wondered. His mind immediately gravitated towards all the frightening, yet unlikely scenarios that could play out. The Night Fury shook his head lightly as he tried to rid his mind of the useless thoughts. Hiccup stepped inside the house and saw his Night Fury gazing into the diminishing fire.

"Hey bud, I'm back," he said cheerfully. Toothless glanced up at his friend before returning to his thoughts. He came over and sat next to his friend, wondering what plagued his mind.

"Is there something wrong Toothless?" Hiccup asked, staring into Toothless' eyes as the reflected the fire. That same feeling churned inside Hiccup once again, a churning, almost like a longing, but for what? Hiccup could feel it burning within him like nothing he'd felt before, and when Toothless turned to look in his eyes, the feeling nearly burst out of his chest.

"It's nothing to worry about," Toothless said, obviously giving him a fake smile and happy attitude. The feeling suddenly died down and was replaced with a slight pang of hurt. His best friend just denied any feeling so of sadness. He didn't confide in him. Hiccup stared into those emerald eyes and saw himself like he those many months ago. The thing was, he didn't know what he saw, only that there was something deep inside those eyes that reflected something deeply familiar.

"You can tell me anything, you know that right?" Hiccup said, scooting closer to his friend as he attempted to comfort him. Toothless smiled again and nodded his head.

"Of course, and the same goes for me too," Toothless said, nudging Hiccup. Hiccup groaned and rolled his eyes.

"Here we go again with the nudging," Hiccup said annoyed. Toothless laughed a bit, but soon his happy expression faded and was again replaced with that same look he had before.

\_ "Anybody could read you like a book, I hope you know that," \_Hiccup thought as he stared into his friend's eyes. Hiccup felt a surge throughout his body, that longing he felt brought back to the surface as he watched the soft glow of the fire bounce off the bigger Night

Fury's scales.

"He's so...beautiful..." \_Hiccup thought to himself\_, "Does he hate me? Everyime he ever shows any affection, I just brush it off. Keeping these feeling surprised are...killing me slowly...but I'm smart enough to know that a human, or a dragon wouldn't be interested in the slightest in...whatever I am." \_Toothless noticed the extended stares and turned to face his friend, cocking his head to the side I confusion.

"Something wrong Hiccup?" Toothless asked as he stared into his friend's green eyes. Hiccup opened his mouth to speak, but for a few moments, no sound came out. Toothless gave Hiccup a weird look, wondering why he had suddenly froze.

"Toothless..." Hiccup whispered out. The bigger Night Fury's heart started pumping.

"Toothless...I think...I think I," Hiccup said trying to find his voice. Toothless heart raced as his mind finished the sentence over and over again in his mind, "Love you, Love you, I think I love you." A rumbling sound was heard and Hiccup looked away embarrassed. Hiccup let out a nervous laugh and backed away from Toothless.

"I think I need some lunch," Hiccup said as he smiled. The smaller Night Fury quickly turned away and checked the kitchen area to see if Gobber had left any food for them, and sure enough, there was plenty of fish for the two of them for the next couple days.

Toothless' heart sunk faster than when he was shot out of the sky that night. The Night Fury was so scared. He didn't know what to do. Maybe he should tell Hiccup now, like Astrid said, he'll only get so much time with him. Make the time last, who knows when the clock runs out for either of them. Toothless opened his mouth and breathed a few quick breaths.

"Oh yeah, I asked Gobber to make you a new tailfin based on some of my designs, ya know, like the one you destroyed last Snoggle-Tog," Hiccup said quickly, voice cracking as he tried to change the subject, "So now you can fly on your own because I don't think I'll be doing any riding anytime soon...maybe flying lessons tomorrow?" Toothless closed his mouth fast, and immediately threw up a smile, crushed he couldn't say what he wanted to, but happy that Hiccup had done this for him.

"Thank you so much Hiccup," Toothless said, returing his gaze to the dying fire.

"Were you going to say something?" Hiccup asked as he pushed his face into the basket of fish. Toothless' heart started racing, mind running through scenarios, feelings of fear spreading throughout his body

"Just say it," \_Toothless thought to himself, \_"You'll never know if you don't say anything, worst thing is he'll say no."\_ Toothless pleaded with himself as he stared at the ground. He was so scared, as scared as he's ever been in his life.

"I...I could lose him for good if I say it though. He could reject me, push me away, become distant. I could be alone again, back before

I met you, before you shot me out of the sky. I..can't lose you...,"\_Toothless thought to himself. His legs started trembling, his claws dug into the ground, and his face turned a lighter hue of blue, his eyes, distant and blank. Hiccup turned and looked closer at his companion to see him trembling, and staring at the ground. Hiccup heart started to race as many ideas shoot through his head as to why his friend was freaking out so badly. The smaller Night Fury slowly approached his friend, putting his feet where he was looking. Toothless' gaze slowly shifted up to the beautiful Night Fury in front of him.

"Hiccup...?," Toothless whispered out. Hiccup felt a pit form in his stomach.

"Toothless, what is it? You can tell me anything, I promise I'll still be here no matter what," Hiccup said as he stared into those scared green eyes. Toothless took a deep breath which only seemed to make his body shake even more. The smaller Night Fury had an emotional storm brewing inside as he watched his friend tremble like this. Never before had he seen him so scared.

"...Hiccup...," Toothless said, taking a step forward, "Hiccup...I...I..." Toothless froze, unable to get past the words 'Hiccup I.' The smaller Night Fury took a step forward, putting a paw on Toothless'

"Bud, what's got you so scared?" Hiccup asked quietly, trying to soothe his friend's trembling. Toothless' eyes filled up with tears as water ran down his face as he thought of all the things that could go wrong if he said those three words.

"Do you promise...to still be here," Toothless choked out. Hiccup felt the pit deepening in his stomach.

"Of course bud, we've been through too much for me to abandon you here," Hiccup said, licking away his friends tears to try and comfort him. Toothless closed his eyes and breathed in and out quickly and deeply.

"Hiccup, I love you."

## 7. Chapter

7

"...Toothless...I...I"

"...Toothless?"

"Toothless!"

\_\*\*SMACK\*\*\_

Toothless shook his head quickly and looked down, a dead fish at his feet. He looked up confused and glanced over at Hiccup who was staring at him annoyed.

\_ "Daydreaming again...of course you're daydreaming again," \_Toothless thought to himself, "Uh, er, what?"

"Did you hear any of what I was saying," Hiccup asked, giving Toothless an amused looked. Toothless turned back to the fire, shaking his head.

"I'm sorry, what were you saying," Toothless asked as he ate the fish lying on the ground. Hiccup rolled his eyes and made his way to the door.

"I said, after I'm done eating, we should go see Gobber. I have a few designs down at the shop for the self-controlled tail fin. Ya know, the one you completely destroyed last month," Hiccup said, giving Toothless a hard time. Toothless growled playfully at him, and moved towards the door, motioning Hiccup out the door. Once out the door, they both took a right, heading out of the market and towards Gobber's shop. The sun had reached its point highest in the sky and provided a clear day.

Hiccup couldn't help but notice Toothless' had been distracted today. He seemed to zone out a lot and either daydream, think heavily about something, or maybe a little bit of both. It worried Hiccup a little, not knowing if this was something he did, or if he was having an off day.

"So, you have something on your mind bud," Hiccup asked to break the endless silence. Toothless didn't seem to be listening again as his gaze was fixed staring straight ahead of him. Hiccup followed Toothless' gaze which led him to Astrid, standing outside Gobber's shop. They seemed to be talking about her axe, with was split in half.

\_ "Now how did that happen,"\_ Hiccup thought, \_ "And why is Toothless so fixed on her?"\_ Hiccup pushed his wandering thoughts away as the pair approached the shop. Astrid turned her head slightly and caught sight of the approaching Night Furies.

"Oh hey," Astrid said cheerfully, waving a hand slightly. Hiccup smiled as the two stopped in front of the shop.

"Hey, what happened to your axe?" Hiccup asked. They both looked over at Gobber who was busy smelting iron and tending fires. Astrid chuckled a bit, and leaned against the shop counter.

"Throwing it at some targets earlier this morning and it sliced through one of them completely and it still had enough energy to break against the concrete wall of the Academy," Astrid said shrugging. Hiccup stared at her, never ceasing to be amazed by her power. Hiccup chest seized up at the sudden realization.

"Oh no," Hiccup said, bringing a paw up to his face, "What are we going to do about the Academy? I'm not exactly in prime condition to be teaching people." Hiccup internally punched himself several times for not realizing this sooner. Astrid punched Hiccup lightly on the shoulder.

"No worries, I asked Fishlegs to take care of the morning drills," Astrid said, happily. Hiccup breathed a sigh of relief, hearing some good news.

"So why are you guys here if you don't mind me asking?" Astrid probed. Hiccup stared at her for a second before remembering why he

came.

"Oh, we came to ask Gobber to make a new tail fin for Toothless," Hiccup said, motioning to Toothless. He turned looked over at his friend who was busy staring off into the sky.

\_ "Again...but what's on your mind?" \_Hiccup thought to himself, that subtle worry seeping back into his chest. Hiccup tried to ignore it and turned back to Astrid.

"You mean like the one Toothless destroyed last month?" Astrid said, making it a point to say the last part loudly. Toothless turned his head quickly, roaring at Astrid.

"I was trying to make a point!" Toothless said. Hiccup laughed at his friend's short temper about the subject, but it also stung a little inside knowing it didn't take much for Astrid to get Toothless' attention.

"Trying to make a point huh?" Hiccup said, nudging his friend. Astrid laughed a bit at the two and pointed towards Hiccup.

"I almost forgot we have our very own dragonese translator," Astrid said smiling, "Maybe now I'll figure out why Stormfly always has to have exactly four fish before she'll go to sleep at night." She turned and looked over the counter and into the shop, watching sparks fly as Gobber started to hammer into some iron. Hiccup had not given that aspect much thought, that he could help other people out with issues they have between their dragons, or mending relationships. Hiccup was interrupted from his thoughts when heavy footsteps drew close to him.

"What can I do for you Hiccup," Gobber said cheerfully. He had changed somehow, a certain aspect of him was just slightly off, or different. Maybe his tone of voice? His stance? Language? What was it?

"Hey Gobber, I was hoping you'd be able to go over a few of my designs I have for Hiccup self-controlled tail fin like the model I made about a month ago?" Hiccup asked. Gobber scratched his head, glancing up at the ceiling before nodding.

"You mean the one Toothless destroyed?" Gobber asked. Toothless let out an annoyed groan, rolling his eyes.

"I was trying to make a point!" Toothless said loudly. Hiccup let out a small laugh and nodded his head in agreement.

"We know, we know!" Hiccup said, shaking his head. Hiccup noticed Gobber giving him a strange look.

"So, you can understand him right?" Gobber asked. Hiccup nodded his head slowly, cocking his head slightly to the side, wondering with this was going.

"But you can't speak the...the uh..?" Gobber asked.

"Dragonese," Astrid said quickly. Astrid thought it was a pretty clever name, she had just thought of it this morning, seeing those two talk to each other.

"Dragonese?" Gobber asked, gesturing his hand to Toothless. Toothless and Hiccup looked at each other for a second and looked back to Gobber.

"All I hear when Toothless talks is Norse, not, uh, Dragonese?" Hiccup tells Gobber. The older Viking brought his hammer attachment up to scratch his head, letting out a subtle 'huh'.

"Anyway, can you make the tail fin?" Hiccup asked. Gobber went back to scratching his chin before nodding.

"It may take a few days for me to make it, since I'm most likely going to have some trouble trying to read your designs, but it can be done. I'm going to need you both to come in a few times so I can make adjustments," Gobber said as he turned and tended to a fire. Hiccup looked to Toothless to make sure it was okay, and sure enough, he was staring back into the clouds. Hiccup let out a low sigh and turned back to Gobber.

"That's fine," Hiccup said, before turning to Astrid, "You gonna stay here?" Astrid pondered on it for a few moments before shaking her head.

"No, I need to head into the market to grab a few things," Astrid said, pushing herself off the counter, stretching herself a bit. Hiccup nodded and smiled.

"Oh good, we need to go there anyway to pick up a few more things for the house," Hiccup said, standing up from his seated position. Astrid rolled her eyes and managed a sarcastic laugh.

"A few things? That house is literally empty Hiccup," Astrid said, punching the Night Fury lightly. Hiccup was a little surprised at how little the punch actually hurt.

\_ "Tougher skin wins again,"\_ Hiccup thought to himself, smiling inwardly. Astrid noticed his lack of reaction and smile so she punched him harder this time, eliciting a loud 'ow' from the smaller Night Fury.

Toothless' ears perked up as he looked over, pulled from his daydreams. Once he was sure Hiccup was okay, he returned to the clouds, again.

"Okay, okay, you made your point, let's just get going," Hiccup said, motioning towards the market. They barely started walking when Hiccup heard Gobber shouting to him.

"Hiccup wait, can I...talk to you in private for a moment?" Gobber asked, motioning the young Night Fury closer. Hiccup turned to Astrid who shrugged at him.

"Sure, I guess," Hiccup said as he approached the shop counter, "I'll catch up with you in a moment Astrid." The young viking nodded and waved goodbye over her head as she walked off, Toothless tagging along behind her.

"Come around inside," Gobber said, motioning towards the door. Once Hiccup was inside, Gobber started rummaging through a few draws then

pulled out a rolled up piece of paper with a bow keeping it rolled. Hiccup looked at the old viking confused, wondering what he had in mind.

"I need you to deliver this to Ulfrik when you go into the market okay? Make sure it gets to him specifically," Gobber said quietly, as if someone were going to hear him. Hiccup cocked his head to the side, looking down at the paper.

"Do you mind if I ask what it is?" Hiccup questioned. Gobber quickly walked over to the shop windows, checking the area before closing them.

"It's a love letter okay? We've been sending them back and forth to each other," Gobber said quietly. Hiccup's ears perked up, this being new news to him.

"Wait, so you're saying you're gay?" Hiccup asked. Gobber nodded his head.

"And my dad is okay with this?" Hiccup asked again. Gobber laughed and sat down across from Hiccup on a sturdy log bench.

"Stoick was the first person I told and he's been completely fine with it," Gobber said happily, "Made my life a lot easier when he became chief and made the thought more accepting among the vikings." Gobber noticed that Hiccup had become unusually silent, staring at his feet for a while, shuffling them slowly.

"Something the matter?" Gobber asked. Hiccup slowly shook his head no, then quickly shook yes, then a slow no again. Gobber looked at him, raising a brow to him.

"Is there something you'd like to share?" Gobber asked, getting up and sitting himself down next to the Night Fury. Hiccup got up and checked out the door discreetly before sitting himself back down.

"I think I might be bisexual," Hiccup quietly said, "I've been thinking it for a while now. Kinda just happened one day." Gobber smiled and patted Hiccup's shoulder with his good hand.

"You know I've always saw you as a nephew to me right? I love you no matter who or what you are Hiccup, same goes for Stoick, your friends, and toothless. No one is going to think ill of you," Gobber reassured Hiccup. The young Night Fury smiled gently, nodding his head lightly.

"Thank you Gobber," Hiccup said, getting up, "I'll be sure Ulfrik gets his letter." With that, Hiccup picked up the paper in his mouth gently and hurried out the door and down into the market. He whizzed by people, dodging passersbys and made his way to the center of the market, coming to a stop at Ulfrik's stall where he sold pottery. Hiccup dropped the letter on the stall counter.

"It's from \_you-know-who\_, " Hiccup whispered out, winking at Ulfrik. The viking was average height, had a scrawny build, with dark brown hair and a clean shave with a small scar running over his left brow. His eyes darted around nervously as he picked up and read the letter. A smile slowly spread across his face as he read the letter. Hiccup decided it as best to leave him to his emotions and left. He walked a

few yards into the market square, looking around for any sign of Toothless or Astrid.

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><p>Astrid and Toothless entered the market, just leaving Hiccup behind with Gobber. The young viking noticed that Toothless had been distant today, staring off into the sky or distance whenever he had the chance. Something was eating away at him slowly and Astrid sure enough knew exactly what it was.</p>

"Instead of daydreaming about it, just tell him," Astrid said to the Night Fury, ripping him from his thoughts again. The Night Fury glanced over at her, thinking in his head the many scenarios that could take place and the multiple outcomes that could come from this confession.

"Stop thinking of all the bad things that could come from it, try to stay positive and upbeat about it," Astrid said quietly as they walked their way across the market.

\_ "How does she do that?" \_Toothless thought to himself. Surely he could keep something hidden from her.

"You don't realize that just about anyone can read you like a book, except Hiccup, he seems to be blind about a lot of things," Astrid said. Toothless internally facepalmed for thinking he was sneaky about his emotions.

"Of course I am," Toothless said to himself. Astrid motioned for Toothless to stop as she turned to a stall that sold jewelry. The young viking looked over several of the necklaces before continuing on her way. Toothless gave her a weird look of confusion. She looked over, seeing his strange looks.

"What? I do have a feminine side you know," Astrid said with a smile. Toothless let out small laugh as they continued on their way to the other end of the market, grabbing a few things along the way. The two walked in comfortable silence as they drew closer to the Night Fury's home. Astrid gasped suddenly, startling Toothless and ripping him from his thoughts as he watched her run towards his shared home. The Night Fury's stomach went cold as he saw eggs coating the windows, paint splattered onto portions of the house, and the words 'Dragon Freak' writing across the door.

\_ "Oh no, he can't see this. He cannot see this," \_Toothless thought to himself in a panic. Astrid dropped her things and immediately went over the windows, trying to wipe some of the egg off. It proved to only help the vandalizers as it smeared over the window, making the situation worse.

"Oh gods, I made it worse!" Astrid said, silently cursing herself. She turned back to face Toothless, wondering what their next plan of action was. She brought a hand up to her mouth as she saw Hiccup stop a few feet away behind Toothless. The bigger Night Fury tilted his head in confusion and turned to look, seeing his friend standing wide-eyed at the scene before him.

"Dragon...freak?" Hiccup whispered out. Toothless immediately rushed to Hiccup, trying to avert his gaze from the house.

"It's going to be okay Hiccup, I promise you, I'll make things okay! You don't have to worry, I'll make sure you're happy okay?" Toothless frantically spewed out. Hiccup just stared into those big emerald eyes. Toothless' stomach sank even further when he saw his friend's eyes start to slowly water up. Hiccup pushed past Toothless and walked towards his home, hanging his head low in defeat. Astrid watched as her friend stopped at the door, staring at the words written boldly in red paint.

"Hiccup, I promise I'll get whoever did this, don't worry," she said as optimistically as she could. Hiccup sighed deeply and pushed against the door, fleeing into the comfort of his new home, letting the door slam shut behind him.

\* \* \*

><p>It had been a few hours since Hiccup shut himself inside his empty room on the second floor. He refused to come out and had been silent for a while now. Toothless didn't know what to do, his affection and love couldn't work on someone who was blind to it. If only Hiccup could realize how much he cared. Astrid had left a while ago and hadn't been back since, saying she needed to do something. Toothless sat in the living room in front of a crackling fire, waiting for something to happen, or an idea to hit him on how to cheer Hiccup up. The Night Fury was alone with his thoughts of the one he loved, constantly trying to figure out a good way to tell him, how to bring it up in a conversation, where and how to do it.</p>

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Toothless perked up his ears, ripped away from his endless thoughts, slowly getting up from his comfortable position and approached the door, stretching himself out along the way. He could hear subtle whispers outside the door and exciting chattering. He stopped in front of the door and pulled it open the best he could.

"Hey!" the group of young vikings shouted in unison, nearly scaring Toothless to death. He backed away from the door to let the vikings in. The twins, Fishlegs, Snotlout, and Astrid, the usual group made their way into the living room, making sure to make enough noise to attract Hiccup out of his room. Sure enough, a few seconds, Hiccup popped his head out of his room, confused from the noise.

"What are you guys doing here?" Hiccup asked as he descended the stairs slowly.

"Hey!" the group shouted in unison, scaring Hiccup, causing him to fall down the last few stairs to his face. The exciting shouting was silenced as Hiccup laid on the ground, regretting his whole life up until that point. Toothless quickly helped Hiccup up, the smaller Night Fury shaking the pain from his face.

"Why are you guys shouting?" Hiccup asked, not in the mood for rambunctious teens. Each of the young vikings was carrying something

in their hands, whether it was a small table, a candle holder, or some other small household item.

"We," Astrid said, moving her hand around the group, "Are here for your housewarming party." The young viking girl smiled as she placed a small table on the floor near the log bench. The other vikings gathered around the fire pit, mildly talking amongst themselves.

"Come on Hiccup, lighten up. Sit down and join the circle for good old time's sake, we'll share a story or two," Fishlegs said happily as he got comfortable. Hiccup looked over at Toothless, giving him a sharp glare.

"You had something to do with this didn't you?" Hiccup asked his Night Fury friend. Toothless smiled and shook his head.

"I didn't have the slightest clue," Toothless said as he joined the circle of young vikings, motioning for Hiccup to join them. The young Night Fury sighed deeply but joined the circle anyway.

"You're gonna pass out if you keep sighing like that," Toothless teased. Hiccup growled at him playfully.

"You don't have to keep reminding me," Hiccup said back. The circle grew quiet after that, an awkward silence growing only being interrupted by the occasional crackle of fire.

"So who's going first?" Tuffnut said, breaking the silence. Nobody said a word as eyes shifted around the room.

"How about you Hiccup? Tell us about your experience so far being a dragon," Fishlegs said bouncing curiously and putting the spotlight on Hiccup. He shifted his eyes around the room, not wanting to be the center of attention and feeling exposed.

"Uhm, sure, I guess, where do you want me to start?" Hiccup asked, looking around at the other vikings. Ruffnut scratched her chin and raised a finger up.

"What was it like when you changed?" Ruffnut asked. Hiccup thought back and had a hard time remember the events surrounding the change. A few minutes before and after was fine, but something kept the thoughts of the change hidden away. Astrid put a hand over her mouth and closed her eyes, trying her hardest to block out the image of her bloodstained clothes that she threw out. Toothless was sitting next to Hiccup, his stomach churning into a knot just thinking about the immense pain his love went through, a low whine of sickness escaping his lips.

"I guess I don't really reme—" Hiccup said as he cut himself off, bringing a paw up to his mouth to keep from puking. The memories flooded back to him, his eyes widened, pupils constricted to slits, breath picked up in heavy pants, heart racing. The memories of the pain, the pounding in his head and body, the blood spraying everywhere, oh gods, the blood, so much blood.

"O-oh gods, t-t-the blood," Hiccup whispered out, eyes welling up with tears. So much blood and pain, even just remembering it hurts his body and head. He rushed outside quickly as he released his

stomach out by the side of the house and into the darkening night. Hiccup immediately began to shut the memories away again, making sure they were locked up tight. He never wanted to feel that pain again, the feeling of waking up with a numb body only to realize you're lying in a pool of your own blood. He heard footsteps quickly come towards him, and a soothing voice call out to him.

"Hiccup, are you...are you okay?" said the soothing voice. Toothless had come to check on him, making sure he was alright. Hiccup nodded his head, turning towards his friend for comfort. Toothless had remained his only constant throughout this whole ordeal, the only one who stayed by his side. Toothless licked away the tears that trailed down Hiccup's face, trying to comfort his friend. Hiccup closed his eyes and sniffled, trying to regain his composure some.

"Thanks bud," Hiccup whispered out. Toothless' heart ached being this close to him without being with him, but he knew better than to say something at a time like this, where Hiccup was at his most vulnerable.

"We should get back inside," Toothless said, motioning back to the doorway. Hiccup nodded and let his dragon lead the way back in. Most of the vikings were looking towards the doorway with concern flooding their eyes. Ruffnut stared at the ground, punching herself in head, constantly saying 'stupid stupid stupid.' Hiccup managed a smile and laughed nervously.

"Don't worry about me, I'm fine guys," Hiccup said, sitting back down. Snotlout whispered over the Fishlegs, making it a point to 'whisper' it loud enough for Hiccup to hear.

"Do you think he saw it?" Snotlout 'whispered.' Hiccup cocked his head at the remark.

"Saw what?" Hiccup asked. Astrid motioned towards the doorway.

"Go see for yourself," she said with a bright smile. Hiccup looked around the room and saw friends with smiles, all happy about something. Hiccup got up and slowly walked outside, with Toothless not far behind. Hiccup's mouth dropped as he saw a clean house, free of any vandalism, save a few spots here and there of red paint or egg yoke.

"Now, I may have known about this one," Toothless said, sitting down next to Hiccup, wrapping his tail around him. Hiccup looked up at his friend, smiling a toothless smile and leaned into him.

"Thank you, bud, thank all you guys," Hiccup said as the other vikings stood in the doorway. Hiccup looked up and marveled at the darkening skies, bright stars appearing across the vast space. Toothless looked up as well, happy at the short moment of closeness they shared, breathing in his scent, feeling his warmth, and just living the in moment. He heard a subtle 'aw' that was barely audible, but brought his head down to look at the source. The young vikings, save Snotlout and Tuffnut, were making hearts with their hands and putting the two in the center. Toothless looked away quickly, embarrassed out of his mind.

"Everyday life slowly goes back to being normal," Hiccup said, breaking his silence as he stared into the night sky, "I think we

could do it, make it on our own for the time being. Hiccup and Toothless versus the world, with their friend's help of course." Toothless smiled at the thought. The two of them together, living together, their own home, living life. With each new star coming into view from the descending sun, Toothless' hope for a life with the one he loves grows. He will tell him the three words soon, but for now, he's content with helping his love getting his life back on track.

## 8. Chapter 8

It was early in the morning when Hiccup woke up from his uneasy sleep. His room still empty, still needing to be occupied with his furniture he left as his father's house up the road, so he slept on the hard wooden floor using his arm as a pillow. He hadn't gotten much sleep that night, rolling around, trying to get comfortable on the hard, creaking surface of the second floor bedroom. With a loud sigh, he got up and stretched himself, hearing cracks and pops echoing throughout the room. Hiccup approached the large one window and opened up, staring into the sky. The night sky still mesmerized the young Night Fury with its swirling colors and vibrant lights that only a dragon could see. Hiccup stared around the window, judging if he could fight through, and with a little effort, he managed to pull himself through and climb on top of the roof. He could see Berk, quiet at this early hour with only a few people walking here and there. In the distance, Hiccup could faintly see the subtle light of the sun as it made its way into the sky. Knowing the serenity of the morning would be ending soon, Hiccup stared into the sky.

"It's hard not to be amazed by this sight," Hiccup whispered to himself. The young dragon started to feel a longing in his chest, wanting to fly among the stars, feel the wind on his face as he flew through the clouds. He missed his time flying with Toothless, just the two of them as one. He missed the wind, the thrill, and most of all, just the time he could spend with this best friend, the only one who seemed to truly understand him.

"Hiccup?" said a whispered voice from down low. Hiccup looked down, not able to find the source of the whisper.

"Hiccup over here," said the voice again. Hiccup looked over his shoulder, seeing another Night Fury down in front of the house looking up at him with his emerald eyes piercing through the dark. Hiccup smiled seeing his Night Fury.

"Hey bud," Hiccup said as he stared down at his friend. Toothless cocked his head in curiosity.

"What are you doing up there?" the Night Fury said, staring up at his friend. Hiccup motioned him up and turned back to the sky. Toothless let out a small 'huh' as he entered the house and climbed onto the roof through the second floor window. Once he was seated comfortably next to Hiccup, he asked again.

"Enjoying the night sky while I still can," Hiccup said quietly, not taking his eyes off of the sky above him. Toothless stared over at his friend, a small pit of worry forming in his stomach.

"You sound like you may never see the stars again," Toothless said quietly as he turned his gaze to the stars above him. Hiccup remained quiet for a little while, letting the silence between them grow. Toothless could see the expanses of stars above them and the swirling stars and colors that exploded throughout the night sky.

"I'm starting to enjoy being a dragon. It's only been a few days, but, with human eyes I couldn't be able to see the stars like this," Hiccup said quietly as he wrapped his tail around his feet, "There's a part of me that is scared that I could change back any day just when I started to enjoy being like this." The two Night Furies stayed silent for a while, enjoying each other's company as the sun started creeping into view over the ever expanding ocean. The sun radiated off of the ocean in a volley of lights and swirling colors that mesmerized all that viewed its beauty.

"I'm afraid to lose being able to speak to you, being able to see a whole new side of life I couldn't see before," Hiccup said as he looked over at his friend. Toothless looked over at Hiccup, seeing fear in his eyes and it caught him a bit off guard.

"But the one thing I'm scared of most...is feeling that pain again...that excruciating pain," Hiccup said, feeling his stomach bubble up just thinking about it. Toothless brought his wing around the young Night Fury and brought them closer together.

"Hiccup, just know I'm always going to be here for you okay? It doesn't matter what you are. I love you for you Hiccup," Toothless said with a smile on his face. Hiccup nodded his head slowly, letting a smile slowly form.

"Then I'll just have to enjoy this while it lasts," Hiccup said quietly. Toothless nodded his head slowly.

"Maybe we should go talk to the Elder," Toothless said as they both stared into the rising sunset, "The least we could do is learn a bit more about this...and hopefully she'll have some answers for us." Hiccup thought about it for a moment and decided it wouldn't hurt to at least try.

"I guess we could later today," Hiccup said. Toothless felt happy inside knowing that Hiccup was starting to like the fact he was a dragon and that he'd prefer to stay that way. His heart felt that pulling sensation again. He wanted so badly to tell Hiccup that he loved him and hug him and kiss him and care for him and show him that he didn't need to worry anymore because he was here.

"I could tell him now, it'd be the perfect time," \_Toothless thought to himself. He opened his mouth several times before he'd shut it and put it off a moment or two longer. The Night Fury suddenly felt something lean against his shoulder. He looked down and realized Hiccup had fallen asleep and ended up resting on his shoulder. Toothless laughed at himself and shook his head.

"It seems I'll never get the chance to tell you how much I love you," Toothless whispered to Hiccup. He turned back to look into the sunset, letting Hiccup sleep on his shoulder for just a bit longer.

\* \* \*

><p>The sun had risen to its peak in the clear sky. Hiccup and Toothless struggled up the long stairway that led to the Elder's home.</p>

"This would be so much easier if we could fly!" Hiccup said loudly as they neared the top. Toothless let out a short laugh and cut off to take a deep breath.

"I hate walking places," Toothless said with exasperated breaths. After a few more painful steps, the two Night Furies reached the top with the Elder already waiting for them, door open and a hand beckoning them in. The duo looked at each other before continuing into the small hut. The Elder was busy mixing herbs but motioned for the two to have a seat wherever they liked. Toothless sniffed around before sitting down next to Hiccup near the entrance to the balcony that overlooked the ocean.

The Elder stopped mixing herbs and slowly turned her head to Hiccup. She cocked her head to the side and made her way over to the young Night Fury. Hiccup drew back slightly as the Elder eyed him with curiosity looking him over.

"Uhh," Hiccup said uncomfortably as the Elder looked over every inch of his face, pulling on his ears, looking in his mouth, checking his eyes, among other things. Toothless looked on, trying his hardest not to laugh. Hiccup could easily see that and glared at his friend playfully. The Elder took a step back and looked him over one last time quickly before nodding her head.

"I've only heard of this once before...a long time ago," The Elder said. Hiccup was caught off guard as she usually didn't talk at all, just relayed messages through drawings or writing.

"Can you tell us a little about what exactly is going on?" Hiccup asked slowly, unsure of himself. The Elder paced the floor slowly, seeming to gather her thoughts together. Hiccup and Toothless sat in uncomfortable silence, waiting for their wise one to speak.

"The last I've heard of this was nearly four centuries ago. A young lad by the name of...Raul Fiske, I believe, had undergone this same...change as you did. He was from the collection of Fell islands which had grand expanses of Mountains. The story goes that he and his village lived in peace before dragons moved their territory into the mountains. At first, no trouble was caused, but after a few years of uneasy co-existence, the vikings of Fell launched an attack on the dragons. Different people will tell different versions of the story. Some say the Fell attacked to drive the dragons out of their hunting grounds and that the village was starving. Other say the dragons were the first to attack, eating and killing people without mercy. Yet, the one I've come to believe was what the few documents that remained detailed. A young viking who went by Dreki...Dreki, Dreki, Dreki, Dreki Bludvist I believe it was, he had this grand scheme that he could tame the dragons and create a grand dragon army to conquer neighboring lands. Many of the vikings had joined with Dreki while a small group led by Raul Fiske worked against them, trying to show that dragons could be tame by building trust, showing them love and affection. Dreki thought the man foolish to believe such a thing and beat dragons into submission. Eventually a small civil war broke out between the two opposing groups that raged on for several years,

claiming the lives of many men and dragons. Then came the battle to end all battles. Dreki and Raul met on the battlefield, their two small groups clashing against one another, brother killing brother over the fate of the world they knew. The story goes that in a flash of lightning, Raul transformed into a dragon unseen by any man before. It was a dragon of massive size capable of freezing an entire island. With this sudden advancement, Raul froze his enemies to death on the battlefield and set the remaining dragons free. His men only spoke very few words with Raul before he died from exhaustion. His final words were written and sealed away, but lucky for me, I managed to get a hold of a copy. Raul had claimed the Gods had bestowed upon this gift so he could bridge the gap between his people and the dragons. That was his destiny, that was his gift, and that was his dying wish that would not be realized. Yes, Dreki did die out on the battlefield, but his hatred for the dragons still thrived on and rumors had begun to spread throughout the viking clans that dragons had mercilessly killed the Fell clan and wiped them all out which is where our war with the dragons started. They sought protection against us vikings and fled to the Red Death which you defeated youngling," The Elder said with a soft and weak voice that carried throughout the home in a soft echo, "Young Hiccup, this is your destiny and your gift. You were changed to bridge the gap between humans and the dragons. You are the hope that every kind soul carries for peace and harmony."

Hiccup sat there, taking it all in, many thoughts crossing in and out of his mind. Toothless turned to his friend and nudge his side to get his attention.

"So why would the Gods make you dragon? Why not just give you the ability to speak with dragons?" Toothless asked. Hiccup shrugged and turned to the Elder to ask for himself. The Elder spoke before he had a chance to relay the question.

"In order to bridge the gap and fully understand both humans and dragons, one must first walk in the shoes of both sides," The Elder said. Both Hiccup and Toothless looked at her in surprise, not from the answer, but the fact she answered at all.

"Can you understand me?" Toothless asked. The Elder nodded with a sweet smile on her face.

"When you're as old as I am, you pick up a few things," she said quietly. Hiccup sat back and thought about the unfolding information. He could hear the soft wind blowing against the hut, creaking the grinding wood slightly.

"Will this be permanent?" Hiccup asked softly, looking into The Elder's eyes questioningly. She stared at him for a while, before shrugging her shoulders.

"I honestly...do not know. It my opinion...it will be permanent," The Elder said quietly as she sat down in her chair. There was a stale silence that filled the air as all three tried to figure out where to go from there.

"I had heard some versions of the story that a dragon who was particularly close to Raul cast the spell or asked the Gods for the change," The Elder said quietly, "Only by killing that dragon while the one the spell was casted on is present could the change be

reversed, but only then. If the dragon is killed while the other is not present, the change will remain. That's what I regretfully told your father, not knowing why he had taken a sudden interest in an old legend from so long ago." Hiccup nodded his head, understanding the situation the Elder was in. Being isolated from the rest of the village, she had no way of knowing what had transpired that day.

"How do you know all of this Elder?" Hiccup asked out of the blue. The Elder's eyes sparkled and her smile returned. She laughed at the unusual question and knew Hiccup would enjoy the answer.

"The vikings of Berk are descendants of the surviving Fell people. The first Haddock hardly knew his father by the time he was a man. He was determined to save his people from extinction, so he took what few people who would listen and brought them to Berk to live out a new life. The poor boy changed his last name from Fiske to Haddock to erase any connections he had with his past. He wanted to keep the wars away from his new home," The Elder said with a smile. Hiccup stared at her for a while, wide-eyed. Toothless hadn't put the pieces together until later when Hiccup finally spoke up.

"Are you telling me I'm a direct descendant of Raul Fiske?" Hiccup asked with a tinge of excitement in his voice. Toothless' ears perked up as he figured it out in his head with Hiccup's help. The Elder laughed a genuine laugh and shook her head slowly.

"I'm not saying anything youngling," she said with a smile, "but I think it is time you both headed home." She got up and motioned for the two to show themselves out. Hiccup reluctantly trudged out the door, many thoughts flying through head. Descendant? Bridge the gap? Permanent?

"Did you find any answers that satisfied you?" Toothless asked as they descended down the long staircase back to ground level. Hiccup nodded his head quickly. Toothless smiled, yelling with joy on the inside knowing that his suggestion helped Hiccup be happy and find some answers. The two enjoyed a peaceful walk back home in silence. Toothless had tried to start a conversation a few times, but Hiccup's mind was too clutter with thoughts of the meeting that he found that his friend couldn't carry out a simple conversation for very long. Toothless noticed Stoick in the distance outside their home, instructing vikings to who were carrying things into their home.

"Did you invite Stoick over today?" Toothless asked. Hiccup's ears perked up and he brought his gaze up from the ground. The young Night Fury cocked his head to the side, seeing his father directing him around their new home. The pair slowly approached their home, more keen on observing than interfering.

"Uh, dad, what are you doing?" Hiccup asked when they were close enough to hear him bickering with himself. Stoick turned around, clearly startled at the sudden voice. Stoick smiled gently and motioned towards the men moving small things into the Night Fury's home.

"I planned on bringing you your furniture and belongings today, but you weren't home so I thought I'd be a nice surprise for when the two of you returned," Stoick said cheerfully. Hiccup nodded his head

approvingly, trying to avoid direct eye contact with his father. Stoick quickly picked up on his son's behavior and his smile gradually faded.

"You know the house feels pretty empty without you two here," Stoick said softly. Hiccup nodded slowly, afraid to look at his father. He could easily feel the pain and regret that filled his father's voice, but right now, he had a hard time trusting his father.

"Just remember that I'm still here for you, and I'll always be. Even if you don't trust me, or want to talk to me, you're still my son, even if you stopped seeing me as your dad. I love you Hiccup," Stoick said softly as he turned away from the young Night Fury and yelled at the men some more, getting angry at how clumsy they were being. Toothless noticed his friend's eyes had begun to water up some. He hated seeing his friend like this, and it seemed like that same tearful face was one he wore a lot lately. It just crushed Toothless knowing that his friend, the person he loved so deeply kept feeling pain even though he tried to keep him happy.

"Toothless, I want to forgive him so badly, tell him everything is alright and we could both go home, but there is still a part of me that needs time to heal and build up that trust again," Hiccup said, his voice cracking a few times. Toothless drew near Hiccup and put a wing around him comfortingly, hating to see the one he loves at war with himself.

"Sh, Hiccup he knows. He knows you love him, and he knows you need time to heal," Toothless said quietly and comfortingly. Toothless couldn't find it in him to be angry at Stoick. He did try to kill him, but then again so had Hiccup once before. Stoick was only trying to protect his son, and only remaining family he had so of course Toothless could see him losing his morality trying to protect the one he loves.

"Chief! Chief!" a voice rang out from up the road. Both Night Furies turned to see the viking who guarded Toothless, Johan, running towards Stoick frantically with a paper in his hand. Stoick turned and took the paper from Johan when he arrived. Stoick quickly unrolled the paper and read through it quickly.

"Oh no, not now, of all the times to visit, why now?" said Stoick, beginning quietly before yelling by the end of the sentence. Hiccup shrugged off Toothless' comforting wing and drew close to his father.

"Dad, what is it?" Hiccup asked trying to get a read on his dad's expression. It was worry mixed with stress and terror. Stoick crumpled up the paper and threw it to the ground, cursing to himself, taking off his helmet and running a hand through his hair.

"It's Dagur. He's decided to make a little visit to their uneasy ally Berk. He'll be here in less than four days," Stoick said loudly and angrily. Hiccup's stomach dropped, thinking of the last time Dagur was here. The boy literally killed a full grown dragon in front of Hiccup back when the two were only seven or eight. The Berserker clan was known for their warriors, and Dagur the Deranged was sure the most psychotic of the Berserkers, no, of humans in general.

"Dad, call a village meeting, I think I have an idea in mind on how

we could deal with this without causing a war," Hiccup said, motioning his father towards town hall.

"This is such a long shot, but here's to hoping," Hiccup thought to himself as He, Stoick, and Toothless made their way to the town hall.

## 9. Chapter 9

Stoick stood on the dock, staring into the glistening sea that brought a small ship closer to the shores of Berk. The viking was nervous but didn't let any emotions show through his mask of pride, confidence, and masculinity. Dagur's ship drew closer and closer, the sound of creaking wood growing louder over time. The Chief sniffed the air, smelling the distinct scent of iron heavy in the air. Blood, the breeze carried the scent of blood throughout the docks, sending a chill down the viking's spine. He could clearly see the ship had large blotches of blood coating its flanks. A head popped over the edge of the boat as it slowly docked. Dagur, a nasty smile on his face.

"Stoick! My old friend!" the young Berserker yelled as he hopped off of his ship, walking confidently over towards the Chief. Stoick could feel the sudden change in atmosphere as Dagur drew near him. The air around him suddenly became stale and thin as if all the life in the passing breeze died in his presence. His eyes pierced into one's soul. The young Berserker didn't even try to hide the fact he was calculating all the ways he could kill Stoick. Of course, the chief never let on he was intimidated by this young boy's presence.

"Dagur," Stoick said stalely. Dagur's sadistic smile never left his face as he stood in front of the Hooligan chief, not intimidated in the slightest despite the chief had a good couple feet on him.

"Shall we head to the hall?" the young Berserker said, motioning up the long steps to the hall, "And where is my favorite scrawny Hooligan?" There was a glint in the young vikings eyes that sent a strong urge of hate down Stoick's spine. The way his voice sounded when he mentioned his son sickened him. There was real sadism in this child's voice when he spoke. Stoick could only wonder what kind of disgusting thoughts went through this Berserker's mind as they ascended the steps, making their way to the great hall.

The town was very empty as Stoick planned. They needed to keep the dragons hidden at all costs and mandated all vikings remain in their homes unless instructed otherwise. Stoick noticed the young Berserker looking around curiously, either admiring the housing, or thinking of different ways he could burn them down. In all the years of the Chief's life, he had never met another being with so much malice, that the very world around him seemed to wither just by his very existance.

"Say Stoick, you never said where little Hiccup was at," Dagur said, breaking his silence, "I haven't seen him in so long, I'd love to give him a friendly...hello." Stoick could see right through his lies, or at least, that's what Dagur wanted him to do. Something wasn't right put the older viking couldn't figure out Dagur's endgame, what he planned to achieve by coming here.

"He's sick, come down with a fever," Stoick said loudly and commandingly. Dagur's eyes closed down a bit when he heard the news, unhappy that he'd most likely not get to see his old 'friend.'

"Well isn't that a shame," the Berserker said unhappily. Stoick felt subtly at ease knowing Dagur won't be going near his son anytime soon. The small group of men made their way to the great hall, entering and making themselves comfortable. Dagur had a treacherous smile on his face, one that Stoick recognized.

"What is your business here," Stoick said convictingly. Dagur had a difficult time trying to get a read on the elder viking's thoughts. He was a closed book that needed a certain key to open, and Dagur knew just the key to unlock the viking. The Berserker let out a short laugh, a devilish smile slowly spreading across his face.

"We are here for simple peace negotiations. An alliance, if you wish, as we had in the past," Dagur said slowly. Stoick stared down the younger viking, wondering why he let himself be read so easily. Was the boy just foolish? No, not in the slightest, not in that cranking gears of a mind. He either wanted Stoick to think he knew his thoughts, or he was so unbelievably confident in himself that he just didn't care. Stoick narrowed his eyes at the boy.

"That's clearly not why you're really here," Stoick said harshly. Dagur's eyes lit up as the smile slowly faded from his face.

"Maybe you're right Stoick," said Dagur in such a soft voice that it sent chills down Stoick's spine. The look in his eyes was just horrifying as if one could see the young viking's soul being burned inside his eyes. Dagur slowly raised a hand as his men got into offensive positions. Stoick slowly nodded his head as his men prepared for a confrontation.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup's stomach felt uneasy with the unusual silence that fell throughout the village. The young Night Fury had made the plan to keep citizens and dragons out of the view of the Berserkers until we knew their full intent. Unfortunately, that meant Hiccup was also forced into hiding in his home with Toothless. The two strained their ears as the small group of vikings passed by their home, hearing mild chatter between Stoick and Dagur. Hiccup's stomach churned hearing the deep malice laced into the Berserker's voice as he mentioned him. The young Night Fury could only faintly remember the last time Dagur had come. That Berserker could smell the weakness radiating off of the young Hiccup and exploited him to his gain. When Hiccup didn't comply, he'd be greeted with a hard punch in the ribs. The Berserker new to keep the bruises and cuts out of view, and keep the charade going that both of them were best friends.</p>

Toothless only felt such a presence once before in his life, back when the Red Death forced it's will upon the lower dragons. To think that such a small being could bring such a powerful and terrifying presence compared to the gigantic beast that once was. His heart raced with fear feeling the air in the house turn stale and lifeless as the viking passed by their home. Toothless' heart slowed back down when he remembered that it was he and Hiccup that defeated the Red Death, and that together, they'd be able to defend Berk against this

foe as well. The Night Fury slowly backed away from the door, nudging Hiccup slightly and motioning him over to the fire pit.

"Any ideas on why they're here?" Toothless asked when he was sure that the viking group was way out of range. Hiccup studied the ground in front him for a few moments before slowly nodding his head.

"From what dad told me yesterday, they're most likely coming here to request submission to their rule. We've heard rumors that the Amund and Haldor tribes had supposedly sworn their allegiance to the Berserkers. However, these tribes are much smaller than Berk which makes me wonder why Dagur would take such a risk threatening a much larger tribe fully knowing that war is a high possibility," Hiccup said, revealing his inner thoughts to Toothless. The bigger Night Fury nodded his head slowly, processing the information bit by bit.

"But that doesn't make sense, he knows the strength of Berk, so why would he threaten us like this?" Toothless asked, shaking his head. It hit Hiccup quickly after Toothless asked the question.

"Unless he plans on war," Hiccup said quickly, "This isn't just a demand for loyalty. It doesn't matter what answer we give him, we are still going to be a threat to him. Whether we say yes or no, he plans on annihilating Berk and everyone on it." Toothless' eyes widened at the realization. Dagur had taken control of smaller villages, tribes, and clans to create a stronger power that could destroy his enemies.

"He realizes that once Berk is out of the way, there are very few other tribes that will take action against his growing power," , "Hiccup said, "We can't afford to let him win."

"Then what do we do Hiccup?" Toothless asked quietly. The young Night Fury shook his head and shrugged his shoulders.

"Right now we'll just have to see how this plays out. We first to need to make sure our suspicions are correct and this isn't just treaty negotiations for further cooperation between the two tribes," Hiccup said. The young Night Fury's head was swirling with many possible outcomes and horrifying futures that could come to pass. The worry seemed to radiate off of him and into the surrounding air. He suddenly felt a presence nestling against him and smelled the familiar scent of his friend.

"I can feel the worry coming off of you Hiccup. Remember that it was the two of us that defeated the Red Death, you and me, "Toothless whispered to his friend, "Trust in me, and in yourself Hiccup, I know we can protect Berk." Hiccup's worries seemed to melt away from his friend's words of encouragement. The young Night Fury leaned into his friend, taking in the nice moment of serenity that the two shared. It was moments like these that reminded Hiccup of their flights they'd take together. Just the two of them and the endless skies ahead of them.

"Thanks bud," Hiccup said.

\_\*\*THUMP\*\*\_

Both Night Furies stared up at the ceiling, wonder what the sound was

that emanated from the second floor. Light footsteps made their way across the wood floor and towards the staircase. A familiar blond head made her way down the stairs. Hiccup cocked his head in confusion and stared at her.

"Couldn't you have, ya know, knocked? Gone through the back door?" Hiccup asked. Astrid smiled and made herself comfortable next to Hiccup, sitting down on the single log bench that surrounded the fire pit.

"Now where's the fun in that?" She asked with her usual Astrid charm. Her smile quickly disappeared however as she got up to throw a log or two into the fire pit, motioning for Toothless to set it ablaze. Once the fire was going and crackling, she nudged Hiccup slightly to get his attention.

"You've figured it out too I assume?" She asked, staring into the burning fire. Hiccup nodded his head quickly not surprised in the slightest that she figured out the Berserker's true intent.

"Any ideas on how we can prevent it," Hiccup asked. Astrid shook her head slowly, bringing a hand up to rub her temple.

"I'm gonna say what you probably already have, we just need to wait and see where this heads. All we have is a theory, not solid evidence," the young viking girl said, her strong confident voice reverberating off the walls. Toothless watched the two, both of them thinking the same train of thought.

"Knowing Hiccup, he'll probably put his life in danger in order to keep the peace," Toothless thought to himself, "If it comes down to it, I'll make sure to protect him with my life." The last thing the Night Fury wanted to think about was his love being hurt yet again. Toothless could feel that Hiccup had changed over the last few days. The young Night Fury had become stronger than he was before, both physically, and mentally and Toothless was thrilled to see it. However, Toothless also knew that the higher Hiccup soared, the farther the fall would be and he needed to make sure that he'd be there for Hiccup no matter what happened. The Night Fury drew a wing around Hiccup and got his attention.

"Hiccup, promise me you won't do something reckless that could get you hurt," Toothless said quietly. The Night Fury could see the internal struggle that was at war within Hiccup, but he reluctantly nodded his head.

"I promise okay? There's no need to be worried, I'll make sure everything works out fine," Hiccup said, trying his hardest to sound confident while he was very uncertain. Needless to say it wasn't very effective and Toothless saw right through the false confidence. Toothless glanced over at Astrid who clearly had a look of worry on her face. The Night Fury knew from that instance that war was a likely possibility. People die in wars, people are lost, tortured, injured, and traumatized by wars. It sunk to the bone of Toothless' body, fearing all those things could happen to his 'rider'. He subconsciously wrapped his wing around Hiccup tighter, pulling him in closer, wanting to keep any harm from coming to him.

"Uh, bud, you're kinda close there," Hiccup said uncomfortably as he tried to push Toothless away some. The Night Fury shook his head

lightly and loosened his grip on Hiccup.

"I was just thinking of...all the horrible things that happen in war...and that what if something happened to you, your father, our friends...our home," Toothless said quietly. Hiccup put his paw on Toothless' smiling up at his friend.

"C'mon, where's that optimism that was here before? You and I, we can do anything together. I mean we defeated the Red Death, how hard can one viking be right?" Hiccup said with a smile, lying through his teeth when he said the final part of the sentence. As if on cue, Dagur's loud voice rang out from town square, up the road from the market. Astrid slowly approached the door and opened it slightly, both the Night Furies right behind her, listening in.

"Vikings of the Hooligan tribe! I have your chief right here! He's been defeated and he'll now pledge his allegiance to the Berserkers!" Dagur's sadistic and malicious voice rang out from the square. Many vikings emerged from their homes, running to the square prepared to fight. Dagur had the upper hand, holding their leader at hostage. Any sudden movements would be met with the beheading of their precious Chief Stoick. Astrid turned back to the two Night Furies and motioned for them to stay.

"You both had better stay here, I need to get up there and scope out the situation," Astrid whispered quickly. She was out the door and on her way to the square before either dragon could voice protest. She pushed her way to the front of the crowd, her eyes fixing on the several Berserker men who surrounded Stoick and Dagur. Astrid felt someone push her aside as another Berserker walked towards Dagur.

"Sir, there was no sign of Hiccup at his home and it seems he hasn't been there in a few days," The Berserker pawn said. Dagur whipped around to Stoick and punched him square in the jaw eliciting angered yelling from the crowd.

"Shut up, shut up, shut up! I'll kill him right now if you so prefer!" The Berserker threatened. Once the crowd fell silent once again, he turned back to Stoick. He stared down the larger viking, giving him a dark and deathly stare.

"Where is your boy Stoick?" He asked softly with a murderous edge in his voice. Stoick spit on the ground in defiance.

"As if I'll ever tell you anything," Stoick said defiantly, a sharp edge to his tone. Dagur smiled deeply and let out a crazed laugh, wiping a tear away from his eye.

"Oh I'll enjoy the hunt. I'll hunt him down and kill him right in front of your eyes. That'll break you for sure," Dagur said with a sinister smile. Stoick didn't let it show, but he was mortified by this kid, barely any older than Hiccup. His mind was so sadistic and demented, yet calm and collected. The perfect Berserker.

"Sir, I also found these drawings and records," another Berserker pawn piped up, "These pictures and document record the legendary Night Fury." Dagur turned his head slowly back to Stoick, a ominous darkness filled his eyes.

"A Night Fury huh Stoick? You managed to bring down a mighty Night Fury? Tell me, how did you do it?" Dagur slowly questioned. Stoick stared into his enemy's eyes, seeing the malicious lust for killing seep into his eyes.

"My son did, actually. He tamed the beast too, tamed all the dragons," Stoick said loudly. Dagur let out a dark laugh, and then remained quiet for a few moments.

"You expect me to believe that shrimp brought down the most elusive dragons in history?" Dagur said, keeping his laughter at bay. Stoick shook his head slowly.

"I could care less what you think," Stoick said defiantly. Dagur cocked his head to the side, his smile quickly fading. He got close to Stoick and knelt down to face him eye to eye.

"Pretty soon, what I think is all that's going to matter in the world," Dagur said, slowly letting a smile spread across his face, "Once I kill you and the rest of this tribe, I'll gladly take the world for my own. The other villages will see your annihilation by my hands and they'll be too scared to do anything about it."

"And what happens if the other tribes form an alliance to defeat you?" Stoick said, trying his hardest to poke holes in Dagur's master plan. The Berserker stared down at his prisoner, thinking for a few moments, and letting the idea sweetly sink in.

"Then I'll just force your son to teach my Berserkers to tame dragons," Dagur said quickly and maliciously before breaking into laughter, "Not so good at protecting your boy or keeping secrets! I'll make sure he suffers good and long before I kill him! I'll use him right up and throw him away like the trash he is!" Stoick quickly stood up and caught the Berserker off guard, landing a strong punch on his jaw, hearing a loud crunch as the boy went sprawling to the ground a few feet away. Stoick ducked down, raising his knee up to break another Berserker's arm, taking his sword away before backing into the crowd of angry vikings that encircled the Berserkers.

Astrid pulled out her newly mended axe that Gobber fixed up. He specifically said that it will perform three times better than the average axe. As Dagur slowly rose to his feet, Astrid rushed him. He dodged the swinging axe, knocking it from her hands. The two dodged and dealt blows on one another, with Astrid proving to be the better fighter. Dagur suddenly dropped to the ground and threw dirt up into her eyes before kicking her away and into the crowd. At this point, the angry vikings and brought the circle closer around the Berserkers, cutting off any escape routes as they slowly lost moving ground. With options dwindling, Dagur rushed the vikings, taking the half-blinded Astrid as a hostage.

"Back up! Back up or I snap her neck!" Dagur threatened, yelling loudly.

Hiccup heard the threats and the yelling and burst from his home, with Toothless right behind him, yelling at him to stop.

"He's faster than I've ever seen him," Toothless thought to himself as he began to overtake the Night Fury, but it was too late.

Dagur stared at the dragon who pushed his way through the crowd and was currently glaring at him.

"Is this...the Night Fury?" He whispered. Astrid elbowed him hard in the gut and kicked her captor away, joining Hiccup by his side. Toothless pushed his way through the crowd quickly and stood next to Hiccup. Dagur's eyes widened in surprise.

"Two Night Furies?" He loudly exclaimed. A sinister smile crept upon his face as he thought of all the horrible things he could do to the creatures and how their stuffed heads would look above his mantle. No, he'd keep at least one alive as a trophy or a personal pet. Hiccup took a step forward and spoke.

"My name is Hiccup, son of Stoick. I command you to leave Berk at once. As the bridge between humans and dragons, I cannot allow such behavior to go without punishment. Leave Berk at once, and never return," Hiccup's voice said commandingly. Astrid, Toothless, everyone stared in shock at Hiccup, never having heard him like this before. Dagur stared, his head cocked to the side in absolute shock. A talking dragon? What is this? Hiccup, that fishbone of a viking?

Dagur quickly picked up Astrid's fallen axe and threw it at the part of the crowd with their backs facing the docks. The vikings quickly moved to dodge the deadly projectile, allowing Dagur to escape through the small opening as he sprinted to his boat, leaving his men behind. Many viking chased after him but he had too much of a lead on them. He quickly untied his boat, and with what little men he had stationed on the ship, he sailed away cursing Berk.

"This cursed island won't exist for much longer! I'll return and kill you all! Hiccup, I will have your head!" Dagur angrily shouted as he sailed farther and farther away.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup and Toothless entered their home, happy the whole ordeal was over. Outside in the market, people gathered and shared stories while the dragons returned to wondering about, happy to be free from cramped homes and the former cells of the Academy. It had been a long day after Dagur left, making sure his father and Astrid were okay, getting scolded by his father, Astrid, and Toothless for making another reckless decision that could've gotten him killed...again, dealing with the fact that Dagur is very likely to return in the next few days with an armada to destroy Berk and discussed battle plans and tactics, going to Gobber's to get preliminary adjustments made to Toothless' new tailfin, and finally getting a much needed dinner before returning home. Hiccup plopped down on the hard ground, exhausted from the day. Toothless pushed Hiccup and motioned for him to get up. Hiccup begrudgingly agreed watching as Toothless used his flames to burn the ground in an area to comfortably fit the two of them as they plopped down onto the ash.</p>

"You've got to stop making me worry all the time," Toothless said with a smile. Hiccup laughed gently, feeling pretty comfortable on the ashen ground. Toothless stared into his friend's deep green eyes, feeling love spread throughout his chest. His sweet scent filled his nose, his subtle warmth filled the room around him, his beautiful

green eyes sparkled whenever he looked at him, his shimmering scales that flowed throughout his body, his sweet voice and loving nature, his very existence made Toothless happy to no end. Hiccup noticed the ended stares and looked at his friend confused. Toothless scooted himself closer to Hiccup and brought his paws around him, bringing him into a warm embrace. Toothless put their noses together, a feeling of happiness sweeping throughout his body. Hiccup stared in surprise at the sudden affectionate gesture and remained still.

"Hiccup....," Toothless whispered gently to his love. Hiccup's heart started racing, his chest constricting in anticipation.

"Hiccup I love you," Toothless whispered out after what seemed like an eternity. Hiccup's chest suddenly became warm.

\_ "He...he loves me?" \_Hiccup thought to himself in disbelief,  
\_ "He...he really loves me?" \_Hiccup's chest become hot, his body felt numb, and his eyes began to tear up. His sparkling emerald eyes, his intoxicating scent, his smooth scales, his soothing and loving voice, his love...his...love...how could he not love his Night Fury...how could he not love Toothless? Toothless pulled him into a hug, bringing his body close to his. Toothless could feel his chest becoming wet with tears as he heard his love silently crying. In his heart, Toothless felt so at ease, and so unbelievably lucky. He felt emotions rippling throughout his chest as he held the one he loved in his embrace.

"I love you too bud, I love you so much," Hiccup quietly said, "I've always loved you, from the day I first met you, and now that I'm...I'm like this...that the gods gave me this curse, this gift...I...I..." Hiccup broke off, his words turning into sobbing. All this time he kept his love bottled up and pushed away, but now, he was so grateful, so grateful for his Night Fury. Toothless hugged him tight, never wanting to let his Night Fury go. To both of them...nothing ever felt so right.

\_ \*\*RING\*\* \_

\_ \*\*RING\*\* \_

\_ \*\*RING\*\* \_

\_ \*\*RING\*\* \_

Both dragons shot up from their positions and rushed to the second floor. Hiccup pushed opened the windows quickly as they both climbed up to the roof. The ringing continued from the town bell. Vikings scrambled around town, orders being given, defenses being raised. The newly coupled Night Furies overlooked a sea of approaching ships. Their love would have to wait another day.

Dagur had brought his armada.

## 10. Chapter 10

Hiccuped stared into the setting sun, a dozen large ships drawing closer to the harbors of Berk. The young Night Fury blinked a few

times, unable to comprehend the approaching armada.

"How could he have returned so quickly?" Hiccup whispered out frantically.

Toothless scanned the area surrounding the two, villagers scrambling about, raising defenses and stockpiling weapons. Commands were being yelled out as men quickly and efficiently carried them out. The war bell still chimed loudly throughout the village, echoing into the distance.

"Damnit, he's always one step ahead of us!" yelled a frustrated Hiccup, "He had his armada docked on a nearby island!" The young Night Fury jumped down from the roof and onto the streets below. He landed swiftly and sprinted into the direction of his father's commanding voice booming out. It took a few moments for Toothless to realize Hiccup had left and saw his lover's tail disappear around a corner. The Night Fury jumped down from his position and chased after Hiccup, trying his best to figure out where he had went.

"Dad! Dad!" Hiccup yelled as he ran to his father issuing out orders to men, Gobber by his side, "What do we do? I didn't expect him to have fully mobilized armada with him!" Hiccup's voice was frantic and erratic, not the usual calm and collected child Stoick had come to know. Stoick raised a hand, requesting that his son be silent.

"Son, I need you to remain calm. I need you and Toothless to defend the upper village where villagers are being evacuated too. If all else fails, you are the final front. I'll be back...probably," His father calmly said, looking deeply into his sons eyes. Hiccup felt a pit form in his stomach. Never before had he seen this look in his father's eyes. The young Night Fury only saw that look once before...when he held a knife to the trapped Toothless, as the Night Fury waited for death to come. Surely Dagur couldn't be more of an adversary than the Red Death.

Hiccup reluctantly nodded his head. Stoick breathed a deep breath and stood, staring off into the reddening sea, the armada nearly upon Berk. With a sharp defiant glint in his dad's eyes, Hiccup watched as his father ran towards the front lines with Gobber in hot pursuit.

"And I'll be here...maybe," Hiccup whispered to himself.

"Hiccup!" yelled a smooth male voice from behind the young Night Fury. Hiccup turned to see Toothless in the distance, running towards him. Hiccup felt a small smile form on his face and took a few steps towards his love.

\_\*\*SSTHMP\*\*\_

Hiccup stopped in his track. An arrow had landed in the road between Hiccup and Toothless. The two stared at the arrow and at each other, both feeling pits form in their stomachs. The sky darkened suddenly as the pair looked to the sky. A massive barage of arrows littered the skies over Berk.

"Toothless! Destory the arrows!" Hiccup yelled subconsiously. Toothless stared into the sky, mortified by the sight but soon snapped out of it. The arrows were drawing closer by the second as

the Night Fury shot blast after blast of plasma into the arrows, effectively destroying many of them. Toothless looked over at Hiccup who had frozen in place, staring into the arrows mere seconds away from plunging into him.

"Hiccup!" Toothless yelled as he pulled his Night Fury behind the cover of a house, thousands of arrows landing around them. Hiccup snapped from his daze and watched the arrows rain down upon them. The young Night Fury watched as a few unlucky vikings got caught in the barrage, blood spraying onto the ground as arrows pierced through their bodies. Hiccup's eyes widened at the blood...so much blood. Toothless shielded Hiccup's eyes from the grisley sight as a few of them writhed on the ground before croaking out their last breath.

"We...we...we aren't even on the front lines..." Hiccup whispered out, "Is this...\_war\_?" Toothless quickly moved him and Hiccup towards the great hall where the villagers were gathering, careful to shield his love's eyes from any carnage they past by.

"Toothless, Hiccup!" A familiar voice called out. Toothless turned to see Astrid making her way closer to the pair. As Astrid came closer, she noticed Hiccup's vacant and mortified stare. She stopped short of the two of them, before she quickly bent down in front of Hiccup.

"Hiccup? Hiccup can you hear me?" Astrid asked softly to the young Night Fury. Hiccup looked up into her eyes, the vacant look quickly fading as he regained his sense.

"We need to move," Astrid said quickly, nudging Hiccup. He nodded his head softly as the trio made their way into the great hall. Toothless looked over his shoulder as they ascended the long stairway leading to the hall. The armada had forcefully docked at the harbor as Berserkers flooded off of the ships. He could hear faint battle cries and dying screams, hoping that Stoick returned safely.

Astrid looked up at the giant doors of the hall, watching as villagers made their way in, carrying what little possession they could carry with them. She watched as a young boy with blood splattered over his abdomen made his way into the hall. The hollow look in his eyes, his careless steps, and the dead air around him. The boy had definitely lost someone. The young viking cringed her teeth thinking back to when she the bells of war woke her from sleep. She hurriedly opened her window to see a cloud of arrows flying at her. The horrified viking girl slammed the window shut and she took cover on the ground, hearing and seeing arrow heads pierce into the wood of her room walls.

The trio quietly slipped into the hall, making their way towards the side for a place to rest. Toothless sat himself and Hiccup down, making sure that his love was comfortable. Hiccup had returned to his vacant stares, looking to the ground as tears streamed down his face. Toothless licked up Hiccup's tears, nuzzling him hoping to comfort his love.

\_ "He's never seen someone die before,"\_ Toothless thought to himself, glancing over to Astrid who slowly shook her head. Astrid had seen death before, back in the days when vikings and dragons were enemies. She saw her fair share of vikings get slaughtered, however, with

Hiccup's rather sheltered life, she didn't think he was familiar with the concept of death.

"I don't mean to be rude, but you're useless like this. The sooner you come to terms with war, the better," Astrid said sternly, being greeted with a glare from Toothless, "I'm sorry but someone has to be the one to tell him." Hiccup nodded his head slowly as he slowly got to his feet.

"No, you're right," Hiccup said quietly. The young Night Fury had regained some of his composure, and his eyes slowly filled with life again. Toothless kept his closeness to his love, making sure that he was truly okay.

"Don't push yourself to much. It's not everyday that you see death," Toothless said softly to his Night Fury. Hiccup nodded slowly, wiping away any tears that remained in his eyes.

"I've got to grow up and face the world sooner or later bud," Hiccup whispered, nuzzling into shoulder, "Thank you." Astrid rolled her eyes quickly and punched of them hardily in the shoulders, eliciting an loud 'ow' from both.

"I'm really happy for you two, but now is not the time to be all lovey-dovey," she said almost angrily. Hiccup nodded his head as he turned to face the crowd of villagers that took refuge in the hall. He scanned among the crowd and found Fishlegs, and the Twins with their families. The young Night Fury turned his head towards the door, noticing Snotlout rushing into the door, breathing heavily.

"I don't like this," Hiccup thought, "I know we were told to guard the door, but dad knows Toothless and I could make a huge impact on the outcome of the battle."

"Oh no," Astrid yelled out, staring at Hiccup. She could read him like a book almost as easily as Toothless.

"If you go out there, you could easily be caught. Not only would Dagur have a hostage, he would also have the Chief's son, the dragon tamer, and a Night Fury all in one swoop. You are staying here with the rest of us!" She said sternly and commandingly, "We need your brain here, protecting the villagers." Hiccup stared at her, slightly intimidated by her presence.

"You make a great leader," Hiccup said quietly. She rolled her eyes and moved towards the door to get a few words with Snotlout.

"Just think of a plan to keep us all safe," Astrid called out over her shoulder as she approached the exhausted Snotlout.

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><p>Stoick ducked and raised his fist in an uppercut, hearing a snapping sound as his fist connected with a Berserker jaw, sending the invader sprawling to the ground a few feet away. He moved backwards, his back connecting with Gobber's as they surveyed the situation. The Berk vikings outnumbered the Berserkers by a small amount, but that number quickly dropped as the Berserkers quickly took down many men before a dent could be made in their invader's

force.<p>

"This isn't looking good Stoick," Gobber said. The old viking blocked an axe with his hammer attachment and sent the Berserker's weapon to the ground as he swung his giant hammer into the Berserker's head, hearing a sickening crack as the invader fell to the ground most likely dead.

"They've already taken out the vanguard," Stoick said angrily. The Berk Chief brought up his axe to block an incoming sword attack, catching the strike and pushing it away, sending his attacker off balance. Stoick took this opportunity to strike down his assailant. The chief didn't remember the last time he had to kill another man. There was too much blood and death in the air, far worse than any past attempts made to look for the dragon's nest before the Red Death. War with other tribes had never been an issue that was brought up, it was always vikings versus dragons up until a few months ago. Although the concept of war was thought of as unlikely didn't mean the Hooligan vikings didn't take special precautions just incase.

"Incoming!" a voice shouted from higher ground. Stoick quickly glanced to the skies to see the small band of dragon rider reinforcements arrive. The dragon riders quickly took to the harbor, setting fire to the few remaining incoming boats. Stoick cringed as he heard the deathly screams of Berserker men who were being burned alive.

"Oh thank gods!" Gobber exclaimed, "Now the real fight begins!" Stoick and Gobber drew back slightly, meeting up with Spitelout who headed the dragon rider brigade.

"It's not looking good Stoick. I sent my men down to the harbor area to cut down their men, but their army is stronger than we could have anticipated," Spitelout explained, "I'm sorry Stoick, but we may need to bring out the Night Furies if the battle continues like this." Stoick clenched his fist but nodded his head, understanding the state of the battle. Spitelout let out a call and his dragon took off into the air. Stoick and Gobber followed Spitelout and his dragon a short ways as they entered the heat of the battle once again. Stoick stared at the battlefield ahead of them, many men on either side slain as blood ran down the streets. Stoick's head felt a tad light, never seeing this much carnage and death before. Dagur had caused this...that deranged kid and his insane goals that will kill him in the end.

"Gobber! On your left!" Stoick shouted out, as he took out a man on his right. Gobber reacted quickly, sending the Berserker sprawling back. The ranks and formation's the Hooligan tribe used had all but fallen apart at this point. All of Stoick's hopes rode on the Dragon Corps. If they could push the Berserker's back enough, they may just be able to win this. The chief had to win this battle, not only for his home, his village, his people, but for the sake of his son. He's lost too much already and he's not about to let his son be tortured and used by that son-of-a-bitch Dagur.

\* \* \*

><p>Astrid looked out the large hall doors, watching as dragon's scorched through the lower city, setting many Berserker's ablaze.

Smoke rose into the growing night sky. Astrid watched as the sun slowly slipped over the horizon, leaving behind a growing darkness. She slowly shut the doors and returned to the hall center where the group was circled up discussing strategy.<p>

"I've got the rear. Ruffnut, Tuffnut, and Fishlegs will be the middle guard, leaving Astrid, Toothless, and Snotlout to defend the front," Hiccup proposed. When no arguments were met with the plan, the young Night Fury shook his head approvingly. Astrid stood for a moment, deciding where to sit, but decided on between Ruffnut and Hiccup, noticing Ruff's flirtatious manner directed towards the Night Fury, effectively creeping him out and moving himself closer to Toothless by the moment. Astrid pushed her way in between the two, hearing a soft sigh of relief come from Hiccup.

"What happens if that plan fails? If they break through our defenses?" Fishlegs asked cautiously. Hiccup contemplated for a few moments, letting an uneasy silence fall between the young vikings.

"Then we all fall back and form a protective barrier around the villagers the be—" Hiccup said, getting cut off at the sound of the hall doors bursting open. Six Berserker invaders rushed in, stopping short in front of the teens who quickly formed their defensive position.

"Now what do we have here? Aren't those the Night Furies Dagur was talking about?" One of the Berserkers whispered. The other few laughed, a sickening humidity in their voice. The atmosphere changed in the hall, becoming stale and lifeless. These men seemed to be just as deranged as Dagur himself, sending off a vibe that struck Hiccup to his very core, rendering his limbs useless and his mind frozen in a state of panic and terror.

"Oh we'll definitely get some great reward bringing them to him," another said lustfully. Hiccup started to worry heavily again, his body tensing up, his mind locking down. He shook his head quickly, trying to maintain his composure and focus, his body trembling. The Berserkers slowly crept up on the young vikings. One charged at Astrid, who quickly redirected his punch and brought her knee up to his elbow, hearing a loud snap echo throughout the hall. She quickly grabbed his face, bringing it in contact with her knee, silencing the screaming that once filled the room.

"That little bitch!" One of the screamed, as the remaining five invaders charged at the young vikings. Toothless swung his tail quickly, sending two more Berserkers into the hall wall, silencing them as they slumped to the ground unconscious. The other three Berserkers charged at the front guard. Ruffnut ran to Astrid quickly, helping her deal with a Berserker with a sword. The two dodged his sword attacks, getting him off balance to where he accidentally fell onto his own sword, stabbing himself in the leg. Tuffnut moved quickly, throwing his axe at the Berserker, distracting him long enough for Snotlout to get a good uppercut on him, sending him back dazed. Tuffnut quickly moved in and went for the second punch, sending the Berserker to the ground out cold.

This final Berserker however, he didn't move. He just watched the young vikings intently. Snotlout rushed the invader, getting punched in the stomach and thrown to the side. Tuffnut followed suit quickly

after, getting his face kicked in. Ruffnut didn't hesitate to follow her brother as she was tossed to the side. Astrid slowly approached the invading viking, waiting for an opportune moment to strike. The two slowly circled each other. Toothless didn't like the waiting and jumped in rushing towards the invader. Astrid took this chance and charged the invader, jumping up sending her foot towards his face. The Berserker quickly grabbed Astrid's foot with his hand, sending her into Snotlout as the struggled to get up. Toothless stopped short in front of the viking that threatened his love and his home.

"I'm going to mount your heads side by side," The Berserker taunted. He quickly moved towards Toothless, connecting a clean uppercut, sending the Night Fury back. Fishlegs took his chance, quickly moving it and striking at the Berserker's kneecaps.

"Gods!" The viking screamed as his knee bent backwards at an odd angle. He punched his knee, pushing it back into place. Fishlegs eye's widened as the viking quickly punched the viking, tossing him to the side. The viking continued his relentless assault on the Night Fury, pushing him closer and closer towards Hiccup. Toothless dodged one of the punches and bit down on his assailant's arm, flinging him off to the side. The viking picked up an axe from the ground, charging at Toothless. The Night Fury dodged the swings, but still got a handle to the face, disorienting him long enough for the viking to send a strong kick into Toothless. The viking stared down at the Night Fury, raising the axe above his head, going for the kill.

Blood sprayed onto the ground around Toothless. The Night Fury looked up and saw the viking was missing his left arm and large chunk of flesh out of his left side. The viking puked blood onto the ground before falling back into a large pool of his own blood, dying before he even hit the floor. All eyes slowly turned towards Hiccup, a small trail of smoke escaping his mouth. The young Night Fury was panting heavily, his eyes wide and pupils in slits. The boy was mortified by his own actions, standing completely still, frozen in place.

"Did...I just...kill a man?" Hiccup whispered out.

## 11. Chapter 11

Stoick brought his fist up, slamming it into a Berserker's face and sending him to the ground in pain. The chief sprinted around the corner, seeing more Berserkers flee behind it. He stopped short and noticed a barricade being built as Berserker vikings retreated behind it.

\_ "They've taken half the village!" \_ Stoick thought to himself in a panic.

"Retreat! Retreat!" A Berserker viking yelled out over the wall. Stoick hid in a nearby home, watching as men fled behind the safety of the wall. When he thought the surrounding area to be free of any Berserker observers, Stoick crept from his shelter and made his way back to his regrouping men. Gobber noticed Stoick and waved him over, a smile on his face.

"Stoick! We drove them back! They're retreating," Gobber said, the

smile slowly fading from his face as Stoick slowly shook his head.

"Gobber they've retreated behind a barricade. They've got half of the village behind those walls," Stoick said sternly, making sure everyone who made it back heard. Stoick looked over his men, happy that so many had returned, but saddened by their defeated expressions. The chief looked over his shoulder, glancing at the destroyed homes, the blood splatter glowing lightly in the dark streets illuminated by torches. Stoick sighed deeply, knowing the battle wasn't over, just on short hiatus.

"Rest up, this battle is over yet," Stoick said loudly. He showed no sign of weakness or any sign of fatigue. He knew his responsibility as a leader and hoped his men would get some confidence by their chief's strength. A flapping sound brought eyes up to the skies as the Dragon Corps descended onto the scene. All the men returned and seemingly sustained little to no damage. Spitelout hopped down from his dragon, calmly making his way over to Stoick.

"They've retreated beyond the wall a good distance, likely going over strategies and replenishing their strength," Spitelout relayed, "It's lucky we formed the Dragon Corps when we did, they certainly didn't expect it. Without this, we would've been overwhelmed a while ago." Stoick nodded his head, glad that they've made some progress at holding off their invaders.

"We've managed to pick apart much of their invading force, but they are still dangerous. We know how Berserkers get when backed into a corner," Spitelout warned. Stoick nodded as the men around him began to eat rations and rebuild their strength.

"There's no need to remind me. I'm just glad that we could hold them off and take down a number of them without sustaining many casualties ourselves," Stoick announced to his men, making sure they heard the last part. Gobber laughed and patted Stoick on the back.

"Well of course. We've got the best men, the best strategy, and the home field advantage," Gobber said with a smile. Stoick nodded his head, allowing a small smile to form on his face. Right now his men needed optimism and hope for the upcoming battle. They already managed to take down many men, they could do this without having to bring the teens into danger. They were the best on the island when it came to dragon handling and formation, but the last thing Stoick wanted was youth getting caught in such a dangerous battle.

"I'm going to check the hall, make sure everyone is okay. Gobber, come with me. Spitelout, I'm leaving you in charge," Stoick said as he turned towards the direction of the hall. Spitelout nodded as he went over battle strategies with the Dragon Corps and ground troops. Gobber jogged to catch up to Stoick, stopping just short of overtaking him.

"They're going to be fine Stoick. That crafty bunch is always one step ahead of us," Gobber said enthusiastically, patting Stoick on the back. The chief gave him a questioning look, but shook it off going up the stairs. Both Gobber and Stoick heard a loud blast come from inside the hall, rushing to the front door and were greeted with a horrible sight.

"What happened here?" Stoick said loudly in shock, bloody coating the floor in front of him. He'd never seen something this bad before, and he'd seen his fair share of injured vikings. This was a different level. Stoick quickly looked up, noticing all the teens staring in one direction. A lone Night Fury with a smoke trail leaving his mouth. Stoick could visibly see his trembling, his deep breaths, his wide slit eyes overflowing with tears.

"Hiccup? Hiccup what happened here?" Gobber said confused and sickened by the grotesque sight in front of him. Astrid quickly turned around and shook her head quickly, holding a finger to her mouth. Stoick and Gobber quickly turned their gaze back to Hiccup. He'd stopped trembling and his breaths were much shallower as the young Night Fury slowly raised his gaze from the ground to the mutilated viking body.

"What...have I done?" Hiccup whispered out, his voice shaking as he took ragged breaths.

Toothless took a few steps closer to his love. He could see the pure terror and self hatred that flooded into Hiccup's eyes. Toothless felt his heart drop. Where did this sudden outburst come from? This isn't like you at all Hiccup. Hiccup quickly looked up at the slowly approaching Toothless and quickly took a few steps back.

"No! Stop! I don't want to hurt anyone! I don't want to hurt someone again! I didn't know it'd kill him! I didn't know! I didn't know!" Hiccup yelled, his eyes screaming a thousand emotions, "It just happened! I'm sorry, I'm sorry! He was going to kill you! He was, he was..." Hiccup trailed off as he slumped to the ground. The young Night Fury was absolutely terrified of himself, of what he did. He clutched his head, trying to block out the world as he screamed, tears rolling down his cheeks. Toothless quickly rushed over and hugged his love, bringing him in close, showing him as much comfort and love as he could manage.

"Just hold on Hiccup. We'll get you through this. You don't have any control over your flames, you didn't know what would happen, you were only protecting me, okay? You're a good person Hiccup, I know, everybody knows you'd never intentionally kill someone," Toothless said loudly, but lovingly, comfortingly. He felt his Night Fury muzzle into his shoulder as he sobbed out to the world. The bigger Night Fury could feel the gently stream of tears flowing down his chest, feeling a tight pull in his chest. His love was crying and he felt compelled to hug him tighter and protect him from the cruel and beautiful world they lived in.

Astrid watched on as Hiccup broke down. She didn't blame him, creating carnage like that to save your friend. It was enough to make any person break down in fear and regret. Combined with the scene he likely saw when the first arrow barrage hit, it was hard for her to imagine a scenario where Hiccup didn't break down at some point. His nature just didn't allow death and destruction. His morals are too strong and solid. She knew her best friend, and this wasn't him.

"Hiccup, it's going to be okay," Astrid said calmly as she knelt down next to the young Night Fury. Hiccup's eyes were opened only slightly, but enough for Astrid to see the great amount of remorse and defeat in his eyes.

"We all know you'd never hurt someone intentionally. You were only protecting Toothless," Astrid said calmly, "I don't blame you at all. Seeing an axe go up, ready to strike down at your Night Fury. I wouldn't be surprised if you reacted on instinct after last time." Astrid rose up from her knees and slowly approached Stoick, motioning the rest of the young vikings to follow her.

Hiccup watched as the young vikings stood in a circle, going over the events that occurred not too long ago. His head buzzing with a surreal feeling and shock. He was terrified of himself. He reacted without thinking and killed a man, and brutally at that. What if it happened again? What if he lost control, react on instinct, or just accidentally fired at someone and hurt them? At this point, his body felt as more of a curse than a gift. Something inside of him stirred however. He pushed himself farther into Toothless, taking in his warm embrace. The strong heartbeat of his Night Fury is what slowly brought him back to reality, to rational thought.

\_ "I...I killed a man...I did," Hiccup thought to himself, \_ "But now..now isn't the time for this...he was going to kill Toothless...yes I went overboard but I don't know what I'm doing. Just...keep your mouth shut. It was a mistake...but everyone is safe...just be thankful for now."\_ The young Night Fury's crying slowly came to a halt after short while. The feeling of being nuzzled into his Night Fury felt so right, so warm, so comforting.

"T-thank you bud," Hiccup whispered, "You're always here for me." The young Night Fury rubbed against his dragon's chest, showing his affection. Toothless licked Hiccup's head, not being greeted by the usual disgusted outcry, but rather a soft purr of love.

\_ "Is he purring?"\_ Toothless thought to himself, a soft blush growing on his face. I was so beautiful, he was so beautiful. All Toothless ever wanted was for his Night Fury to be happy, to protect him, to make him feel loved, to care for him, to ease his worries and doubts. So far, he'd felt as if he failed protecting his love and it seemed as if he was doing protecting.

"I promise to be the one protecting, don't worry. I want you to know how much I love you," Toothless whispered to Hiccup. Hiccup let a smile form as he licked his dragon affectionately.

"And I love you too, to much for words," Hiccup said. He heard a soft cough from the direction of his father. He quickly turned to look, his ears perked up and pupils widening. The small group of vikings were giving them both weird and confused looks. The twins looked just about as confused as they usually do, Snotlout just stared with an open mouth, Fishlegs scratched his head uncomfortably, Gobber had a raised brow and a questioning look, Astrid had a small smile as made a heart with her hand. Then there was Stoick, who just stared at the two with that usual disappointed look Hiccup was familiar with.

"Look, I can expl-" Hiccup started off.

"We'll talk about it later, now's not the time or the place for that. Just get over here and listen to what I have to say," Stoick said, shaking his head. Hiccup and Toothless made their way awkwardly over to the group, not enjoying the awkward silence and stares that they

were received with.

"Right, as I was saying. You did a great job defending the villagers, and your efforts have not been in vain. With the Dragon Corps on our side, we've managed to push back and defeat much of their original force with many of their remaining men barricading themselves on the lower half of the village," Stoick said sternly, "From what we can assume, their regrouping, rearming and replenishing their soldiers. We've gotten lucky and we've only lost a few men. With our force, we are likely to drive them out of Berk by sunrise. Now, if anything goes wrong, you are our last resort, our trump card. I don't want any of you out on that battlefield unless its absolutely necessary, got it?" The teens nodded their heads swiftly, understanding their orders. With that, Stoick and Gobber wished them luck and made their way back to their men.

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><p>Spitelout gave out locations to his men as he flew over the upper village, scanning for any injured, or dead of their own and keeping a keen eye out for any Berserker stragglers or attacking force. Spitelout flew to the ground, frustrated from the lack of lighting that usually overflowed through the streets. He couldn't find anyone, let alone see anyone in the dark. He pulled a torch out of his dragon's side pouch and held it up. Spitelout's Monstrous Nightmare nodded and blew out a small flame to light the torch. The pair walked through the dark night, making sure to make as little noise and attract as little attention as possible.</p>

He peeked around a corner, noticed a barricade in front of him. He quickly put out his torch and slowly slid his view around the corner again. No one seemed to be guarding it and it looked poorly built in contrast to the others. Spitelout quickly got onto his Nightmare as they took off back towards the viking camp. He jumped off of his dragon and ran towards Stoick and Gobber who had recently returned and were currently telling worried fathers, mothers, and friends that everyone was okay. Spitelout stopped short in front of Stoick when he heard his son was okay, a wave of relief flooding through his body.

"Is something wrong Spite?" Stoick asked, turning to his brother. The younger sibling shook his head lightly and walked closer.

"I've found a poorly built barricade that looks unguarded. This could be our ticket into their camp," Spitelout said quickly. Many men breathed sighs of relief and a small ripple of quiet cheering swept through the men. Stoick raised his hand up, asking for silence.

"Get your things together men, we are going in," Stoick announced, "Johan! Come here." The young viking obliged his chief and quickly approached him.

"Go to the hall and keep guard there. I'd feel a lot better if I had a capable viking up there as well," Stoick said, a tinge of worry fleeting through his voice. The young viking nodded his head in understanding.

"Yes sir," Johan said, bowing slightly. Stoick watched for a bit as the young Viking disappeared from view. A hand waved in front of Stoick face, turning his attention towards the hand's owner.

"Like I said before, those kids can hold their own against some Berserkers. Besides, we just need to sneak into their barricade and strike them while they're weak," Gobber said, "We finish off their invasion and we send them back to wherever they came from." Stoick was amazed at how optimistic his friend and trusted ally always was. Either that or he was just really good at hiding his fears and doubts. Stoick only nodded slightly.

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><p>Hiccup sat with Toothless near the center of the hall in the circle of young vikings once again. Hiccup glanced over at the pool of blood where the dead Berserker once lay before Toothless removed his body from the hall. Hiccup still subconsciously shook when he thought about the viking and his mangled body. It was another image to be locked away in his vault alongside the memories of his transformation on the street that day.</p>

There was an uncomfortable silence in the air, accompanied by Astrid's soft smile. She nodded her head, almost as if she won something. She had been acting strange ever since earlier when his father scolded him for his affectionate displays in public, during a battle with another tribe.

"So, uh, what exactly is going on here between you two?" Fishlegs asked breaking the deafening silence between them. Hiccup averted eye contact with the others, shifting his feet uncomfortably.

"Uhm, well, I...we..." Hiccup started to say, failing to really explain anything. Astrid's short laughter broke through his sentence, eyes going to her.

"They are in l, o, v, e," Astrid said teasingly a giant smile on her face. Confusion came back to the vikings faces as they looked at one another.

"I can understand the fact that you like guys, but a dragon?" Snotlout said in his usual judgmental tone. Hiccup scratched his arm feeling really uncomfortable.

\_ "How are you going to talk yourself out of this one,"\_ Hiccup thought to himself trying to formulate a solid response.

"Well, it can't be too hard to imagine. I mean, he's been there for me from the start, since before this...this uh...change," Hiccup said, gesturing to his body, "If I still had a human body...It'd be a bit weird, b-but I'm a dragon...and a dragon's allowed to fall in love right?" The young vikings looked around at each other and nodded in a 'I guess so?' kind of manner. They were all very unadjusted to the idea, and they're most likely still not used to the idea that Hiccup, his normal, usual, clumsy and intelligent self, just a dragon.

"Maybe we should...talk about this another time...when the air isn't thick with war," Hiccup said, hoping to drop the subject. Toothless nudged his Night Fury slightly.

"Isn't that uncomfortable for you?" Toothless asked with a tinge of laughter in his voice. Hiccup stuck his tongue out at the Night Fury

playfully.

"There's a time and a place for everything bud, and now is not the time for conversations about relationships," Hiccup said with a sarcastic attitude, making hand gestures and head movements.

Toothless laughed slightly watching his love trying to amuse him. The door to the hall creaked open as Johan stepped in. He quickly closed the door behind him and approached the circled teens. The viking stopped short of the group, staring at Hiccup with a tinge of fear and wonder in his eyes. Hiccup noticed and remembered that stare all too well from the many villagers he'd pass on the streets.

"Johan! What are you doing here?" Ruffnut asked, giving him a wink as the viking slowly drew closer. Johan flinched some from the unwanted advances made by the female twin. He made his way around the group, trying to keep distance between him and Hiccup, but tried to keep casual and inconspicuous about it.

"The Chief asked me to come and help out here if anything goes wrong. They found a weak point in the barricade and they're going to sneak through it and attack them while their weak," Johan said in a flat voice. It wasn't that Johan never seemed to have any enthusiasm, he's just the type of viking who avoids putting any emotion into their voice. The young viking also fidgeted as he stood watching the group, as if constantly worried about something.

"Where was this weak spot at?" Fishlegs asked. Johan scratched his cheek for a moment before answering.

"It was over by the market, just slightly south of the log stall. I think that's what Spitelout said at least. We got lucky, the barricade was badly built and no one was guarding it," Johan said in his ragged and flat voice. Hiccup cocked his head to the side, wondering why they'd leave a poorly constructed barricade like that unattended. Surely they were smart enough to do something about it? Maybe Dagur was defeated on the battlefield and the Berserkers were just scrambling to buy some time behind those walls. No, Dagur was too strong of a fighter and strategist to allow himself to be brought down so easily. The question is back to being why. Why would you leave that specific, badly built wall unattended? Unless you want us to think it's unattended. Maybe that's what he planned on, one of our vikings finding the weak point and they'd attack it by 'sneaking' through. Hiccup's eyes widened as he figured it out in his head.

"It's a trap!" Hiccup screamed out as he took off out of the hall, flying down the staircase with a confused Toothless and young vikings hot on his tail.

## 12. Chapter 12

Hiccup ran, ran until his throat stung. He could hear Toothless behind him telling him to stop and slow down. The young Night Fury needed to get to his father and warn him. He couldn't let anything happen to his father. He couldn't stop his father before he went to fight the Red Death, but he sure as hell could make it this time. Hiccup suddenly felt something grab around his tail and pull him back suddenly. Next thing he knew, Toothless had pinned him to the ground. The young Night Fury stared up at his love in anger and confusion as

to why he stopped him suddenly. Every moment they wasted here was time they could have used to save his dad.

"What are you doing?" Hiccup yelled at the bigger Night Fury, struggling and failing to get free from his grip. The younger Night Fury stared into his Night Fury's eyes, seeing him slowly shake his head.

"What do you plan on doing once you get there? Johan said that they were likely already through the wall back there but something tells me you weren't listening. You need to stop and think, use that head of yours okay?" Toothless said in that smooth and gentle voice of his. Hiccup slowly stopped struggling and quickly flipped himself and Toothless over. Hiccup was on top this time, staring down at Toothless.

"I win," Hiccup whispered out before backing off of the Night Fury. Toothless slowly rose up and sat in front of Hiccup, having a good foot or two on him. Hiccup adjusted his ears, listening as a volley of footsteps drew closer to them. He could see Astrid explode around the corner in the darkness, followed by the rest of the young vikings. Astrid slowed her pace as she approached the two sitting Night Furies.

"Thank gods you stopped him," Astrid said through heavy breaths. She quickly walked over and punched Hiccup hard in the arm eliciting a loud 'ow' from him. Toothless quickly turned his head out a short menacing growl towards her. He quickly recoiled and cover his mouth with his two front paws.

"I'm so sorry," He said quietly through his paws. Astrid stared at him, a little shocked, but tried to shrug it off.

"He says he's sorry," Hiccup said quietly as he rubbed his shoulders. Astrid gave the smaller Night Fury a sharp glare.

"And what? You're not?" She said angrily, "You rushed out of the hall without hesitation or warning with no plan, and didn't wait for the rest of us. Do you have any idea what could've happened if they were already captured, and as shown from earlier, I wouldn't doubt that you'd charge right in, get captured, killed, or worse, forced to be that vile creature's pet!" Her eyes were more filled with fear than anger at this point. She slowly looked down and sigh, taking a seat next to the Night Fury. The other four vikings had walked the rest of the way there when they saw the two dragons, just making their way close enough to talk. Fishlegs pulled the torch wood from his belt and lit it, illuminating the surrounding area.

"And you say I'm the stupid one," Snotlout said sarcastically, giving his cousin a hard time. Hiccup rolled his eyes and shifted his view away, choosing to look towards the direction of the barricades.

"Well, we've come this far, so I hope you have a plan," Fishlegs said between heavy pants. He still hadn't caught his breath and he was looking very red from all the running. Hiccup ears perked up as he turned back to face the teens. A shimmer shone in the Night Fury's eyes as hope slowly returned to his heart that he could save his father, but it quickly disappeared when he realized he had no plan whatsoever and had acted on impulse.

"No, I don't," Hiccup said, slowly shaking his head as he stared at his shuffling feet. He could see Astrid eye's roll and head slightly shake out of his peripheral vision. Hiccup's mind wouldn't function right. His mind kept gravitating towards all the possible things the Berserkers could be doing to his father and everyone else. Every time he tried to think of a way to get them out, he just slumped back to fear.

"What if we had Snotlout and the Twins cause trouble around the east barricades where Stoick and his men first went through. I'll make my way towards the center and try to draw attention to myself. Stormfly and I will be the decoys made to look like we are the ones trying to get into the lower half of town. Toothless and Hiccup will go to the west end and try to sneak their way. I say you two because you'll be able to blend into your surroundings better and have more strength and trust than the rest of us combined," Astrid proposed, getting interested looks from her fellow vikings, "Once inside, you two will try to find where our soldiers are being kept. When you find them, fire off one plasmablast into the air. That will be the signal for the rest of us to swoop into their camp and cause as much destruction and havoc as we can manage, just be careful to avoid any of our men. In the chaos that will hopefully ensue, Toothless and Hiccup will free our soldiers as we begin to attack from the inside out."

Fishlegs raised a brow, impressed by the plan, giving a small nod of approval. The rest of the young vikings nodded their heads along as well, not having any better ideas than that. Hiccup thought of the plan and how dangerous it would be for everyone involved, trying to weigh whether it was truly worth it.

"That could actually work," He said confidently. Hiccup heard the optimistic tone in his voice, but somehow it made the pit in his stomach deeper. He saw first hand what the Berserkers were capable off, the killing, the blood, the death. The mutilated Berserker flashed into Hiccup's mind quickly and harshly, sending a chill down the Night Fury's spine.

"This isn't like what we've faced in the past. Sure there was a large chance that some of us could've died fighting the Red Death, but this is different. These are humans, people who won't show any hesitation about killing us. They won't be easily fooled and they will attack with the intent to kill in mind," Hiccup said with terror edging into his voice, "Back at the hall was nothing compared to what could happen. We've never seen a true battle before, a tribe against a tribe. Sure we may have seen a few badly injured vikings when we fought the dragons, but this, this is murder. I suggest you think long and hard about the coming battle if you so choose to go through with this plan." Hiccup stared around at his friends, seeing the hesitation in many of their eyes.

Toothless suddenly felt a hot ripple of fear shoot through his body. Hiccup was right, they were ruthless and they would kill if they got the chance. The chances of the plan going flawlessly weren't too great and the chances for casualties were far too great almost on the verge of a suicide plan.

\_ "What if we get caught?" \_Toothless thought, \_ "They could kill us both. Worse, they'd kill one of us and make the other watch. They'd probably kill me slowly in front of Hiccup and then force him to tame dragons, threatening the lives of our friends if he didn't follow

commands." \_ Toothless began to worry, a strong scent of panic suddenly rippling off of him. Hiccup got up suddenly, and motioned for Toothless to follow him. The Night Fury cocked his head, and followed his dragon, turning to see the confused faces behind him. The Night Fury shrugged his shoulders lightly and quickly turned to catch up to Hiccup.

"I know you're scared," Hiccup said once they were out of earshot of the other vikings, "but we have to do this. I could practically smell the fear coming off of you." Toothless brought his Night Fury into a tight hug.

"I'm just so scared, not of what they'll do to me, or if they kill us both. It's that I could lose you today. I just got you and I don't want to let go," Toothless said quietly, his voice on the verge of breaking, "Promise me you won't leave, promise me you won't die today." He felt his Night Fury hug him back just as tight.

"I promise...I promise I won't leave you," Hiccup whispered out. The two stayed in each other's embrace for a few short minutes. They both feared what was to come.

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><p>Stoick's vision slowly cleared, his face throbbing with pain from the punch he'd just received. He was forced down on his knees, his hands and feet chained. Behind the chief, his men were forced to watch on as their leader was beat. They were in town square illuminated brightly by many torches lining the area, the vikings chained down in front of a stage that Dagur had created for this event specifically.</p>

"You're a tough one aren't ya? The great Stoick the Vast brought down by a child and his armada huh? Pathetic, I expected more of a challenge. I can't believe you'd actually fall for this little trap I set. I'm sure your son would be more of a challenge, he was always smart. He'd certainly put up a better show than you," Dagur taunted, "He's the only viking on this miserable island that I'd consider worthy of becoming a Berserker. Sure he isn't tough and most likely a reliability most of the time, but is he clever, and a dragon tamer from what I heard earlier huh Stoick?" Stoick spit out some blood at Dagur's feet in defiance.

"As if my son would ever become a Berserker," Stoick said with disgust in his voice. Dagur looked down at him with a sadistic glare. The young Berserker started to chuckle which quickly turned into a harsh laugh.

"Oh Stoick, you make me laugh," Dagur said, wiping away tears from his laughter, "I can be pretty...convincing." He swiftly kicked Stoick in the face, sending him the ground. Dagur grabbed the chief's hair and brought his head back up, staring into his pain filled eyes.

"You know what Dagur?" Stoick said quietly. Dagur strained his ears and went in closer to the beaten chief.

"What was that?" Dagur said tauntingly. Stoick quickly slammed his head into Dagur, sending the Berserker sprawling back, clutching his head.

"You can't be that smart if you fell for that," Stoick said as he shook away the pain. Dagur quickly hopped back to his feet, anger flowing through his body. He raised his hand and motioned a guard over to him. Dagur walked over and kicked Stoick off of the stage, a loud thud emanating from the ground below. Stoick quickly got to his feet, as he stared up at the invader. The Berserker crouched down to get closer to the chief.

"I want him," Dagur said, pointing to a Berk viking in the middle of the crowd. Stoick quickly turned to see a Berserker guard roughly grab one of his men and drag him to the stage. When he was put on center stage, Stoick could see it was one of the older vikings, Osmond. His old body showed defeat and fatigue, but the fight in his eyes showed he was far from finished.

"I just decided," Dagur said loudly and harshly, "I'm going to kill every one of your men until it's just you and me left!" Immediately the vikings cried out in anger and defiance. Dagur quickly grabbed the old man and took out his pocket knife, holding it over Osmond's neck. The action quickly silenced the vikings as they waited for the next move in fear.

"And! And, I'm going to drag your son out here and have him watch as I kill you nice and slowly," Dagur said. He flashed a sinister smile as he plunged his knife into Osmond's neck, ripping it through his neck. Stoick's eyes widened as he fell back, blood spraying onto him. Osmond didn't suffer long, he was unconscious within a few seconds and dead within the minute.

"Bring me another!" Dagur shouted as he kicked Osmond's lifeless body onto the ground in front of Stoick. The chief brought his hands down and put them under Osmond's head. Even though his death was violent and painful, he still died with a peaceful expression on his face.

"Sir!" A guard yelled as he approached Dagur. The Berserker chief let out a loud groan of annoyance as he turned to his subordinate.

"There are dragons attacking the east barricades sir!" The guard said quickly and loudly. Dagur looked at him and brought his blood stained hands up to his chin.

"How many?" Dagur asked.

"A monstrous nightmare and a zippleback along with three riders sir," the guard relayed. Dagur nodded his head and smiled.

"Alright then, have some guards get on that and have everyone else look for another rider trying to sneak in. If you manage to catch this one, bring him to me, I have a present to give to him," Dagur said with a wicked smirk. He shooed the guard away and returned to center stage.

"Ah! Stoick! It seems your son is coming to us! How convenient! Let's be sure to have a nice surprise waiting for him!" Dagur yelled sadistically, "Bring me another one!"

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup and Toothless slowly crept towards the second west barricade. They had just received the signal from Astrid to move in and sure enough, only one guard remained at the barricade as the others likely left to stop Astrid or the other riders. The two quickly flattened themselves against the barricade. Hiccup motioned his head upwards towards the one guard on watch. Toothless quickly jumped and dragged the viking down, slamming him against the ground rendering him unconscious. They two quickly hide the unconscious viking in a nearby house before returning to the barricade. Hiccup slowly climbed up it, getting a nice view over the wall. No other guards seemed to be around.</p>

"Coast is clear," Hiccup whispered down to Toothless who then jumped up and over along with him. The pair slipped through the deserted streets of the village, hearing shouts and orders in the distance.

"Look there," Toothless whispered. Hiccup quickly turned his head to where the Night Fury had motioned and saw the glow of torches, and a lot of them. The small Night Fury looked back at Toothless and nodded as they both made their way towards the light source. The closer the two got, the louder they could hear screams of agony and anger. The closer the two got, the bigger the pit in Hiccup's stomach felt. His mind swam with endless possibilities, fearing that his father and his men were being tortured and beaten. It never occurred to Hiccup that they were being killed. Hiccup's breath caught in his throat as he peeked his head around the corner. He whipped back quickly, his heart sunk faster than Toothless when he shot him out of the sky.

"No, no, no, no, no," Hiccup whispered out frantically. Toothless moved closer to see but Hiccup quickly brought his wing up to stop him, quickly shaking his head no. The Night Fury looked at his love with a deep concern and fear in his eyes, but nodded his head.

Toothless looked around quickly to make sure no one was nearby. He quickly sent a plasma blast into the air, hoping no one saw where it came from. The Night Fury quickly heard yelling coming from the town square and footsteps going in the opposite direction. Toothless breathed out a small sigh of relief and nuzzled up close to Hiccup.

"Hiccup...what did you see?" Toothless asked quietly. Hiccup's eyes were wide and his pupils had become slits again. He'd gone back into his dream-like daze again, which meant it could have only been bad. Toothless gently shook his Night Fury, slowly bringing him back to reality.

"Hiccup...what happened? Are you going to be okay?" Toothless asked again, concern filling his voice even more. He'd rather know what was around that corner before he sees it, but the last thing he wanted to do as make Hiccup relive it so he immediately took back his words.

"There are...at least ten dead..it's really bad Toothless, it's really bad," Hiccup whispered out, terror filling his eyes. Toothless moved around and sat in front of Hiccup, putting his paws on the smaller Night Fury's shoulders.

"It's going to get worse if we don't go out there and stop them," Toothless said sternly, "I'm sorry, I'm so sorry. If you want to stay here, then please, stay. I don't want you to have to see anything like that." Hiccup quickly shook his head.

"No, I have to do this, we have to do this," Hiccup said, "Astrid and everyone else should be here soon and we'll take them on." Almost as if on cue, the two heard an explosions and fire ripping through the lower village. Their counter-attack had started. Both Night Furies shot around the corner. Toothless quickly stormed the stage, knocking away two remaining guards before they knew what was happening. Hiccup quickly started ripping away at the vikings chains, trying to get as many as possible.

"Hey!" a Berserker guard shouted, running at Hiccup with a raised hammer. Toothless quickly sent a soft plasma blast at the viking's side, sending him a few feet away, unconscious. The Night Fury jumped down from the stage and started destroying chains, starting off with Stoick's and working his way back.

"What are you two doing here?" Stoick yelled angrily, "Dagur knows you both were coming!" Hiccup glanced up at his father, giving him a sharp look before continuing destroying chains. Stoick looked at his son in angered shock and approached his son.

"Leave! Go!" Stoick yelled at his son moving in front of him, "Take your Night Fury and go! Now! I've got the rest of the men, you two need to leave before you get hurt!" Hiccup tried to move past his father, but kept getting blocked. He stared up at his father and quickly gave in when he saw the angered and frustrated glare was getting. Hiccup nodded his head and motioned for Toothless.

"Don't die on me dad," Hiccup said quietly as he and Toothless made their way back towards their entrance. Hiccup's mind was swimming with thoughts, trying his hardest to avoid the images that plagued his mind...those images of the dead vikings, their bodies strewn out in front of the stage. Those images brought back the viking he accidentally killed, and the villagers who were killed by the arrows, and the pain he felt during the change. Toothless stopped when he no longer heard his Night Fury's feet and looked back. Hiccup quickly moved to the side of a house and started puking. Toothless rushed to his love's side and comforted him until he was finished.

"I'm...sorry...I just...it just," Hiccup stammered out.

"Sh, Hiccup it's okay, let's just get back to the hall," Toothless said. Hiccup nodded his head and they both moved out from behind the house and back onto the street.

"Well well well," said a voice behind the two, "It must be my lucky day!"

### 13. Chapter 13

"Well well well," said a sadistic voice, "It must be my lucky day!"

Hiccup and Toothless quickly whipped around to face the owner of the

voice. Dagur, standing tall with four big men behind him. His eyes gleamed with a sadistic tone, his smile shone with a harsh brutality, and his hammer that he had slung over his shoulder was coated with a dark red substance. The young Berserker's malice just seem to radiate off of him through the dim light the rising sun and the few torches around provided. The two men with him showed almost no emotion besides a disturbingly vacant glare as they stared at the two young Night Furies.

Toothless immediately went into defensive mode, pulling Hiccup behind him as he growled at the invaders. Dagur, raised a brow and quickly started laughing, wiping away a tear that rolled down his cheek.

"Oh! That was cute! Do it again!" Dagur teased, pointing his large hammer towards the pair. The two opposing groups stared at each other for a few moments, seeing who would make the first move. Hiccup kept a close eye on Dagur when his eyes suddenly lit up.

"You know Hiccup, I saw your dad just a bit ago! Yeah!" Dagur said in a light tone, "I slit a few throats here and there and made him watch the whole thing!" Hiccup felt his throat clench and stomach drop listening to this insane human ramble on.

"You should have seen the horror in his eyes as one lad, what was his name? Was it Ozzy? Osborne? I think it was Osbourne...no, no, that doesn't seem right," Dagur said sarcastically, trying to draw out his story hoping to evoke a reaction from the young Night Fury.

"Osmond, sir," said one of the vikings with voice even more vacant than his stare. Dagur patted his shoulder and let out a loud 'ah.'

"It was Osmond! I stabbed him in the throat and ripped across, hearing his gurgles of death as blood sprayed down onto your horrified father!" Dagur said happily as he recalled the memory. Hiccup's teeth clenched and his eyes hardened.

"This...this is unforgivable," Hiccup thought in rage. The young Night Fury quickly pushed past Toothless as he charged Dagur. He could see the Berserker flash a smile of victory as Hiccup realized his mistake far too late. Dagur quickly dodged the charge, and as Hiccup turned around to face his opponent, he felt four large, strong hands slam him down. Toothless quickly ran to his dragon with the intent to maim the beasts who touched him, but as he was upon them Dagur swing his hammer, narrowly missing the dragon as he quickly backed off. Hiccup struggled against his captors and was resulted with a hard kick to the face, sending him into a daze.

Toothless roared fiercely at his opponents in frustration and anger.

\_ "What do I do? The closer I get, the more likely they'll hurt him," \_Toothless thought frantically. His heart was racing and his mind was buzzing with horrible scenarios if he couldn't rescue his dragon and failed. Dagur slowly approached the Night Fury in a battle ready stance. Toothless quickly realized what the Berserker had planned. He was going to kill Toothless and make Hiccup watch it all. His body tensed, ready to fight this Berserker until his last breath. He was going to rescues his Night Fury even if it meant he died trying.

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><p>Stoick and Gobber charged through the streets, chasing after a few Berserker stragglers. Shortly after Hiccup and Toothless were ordered to leave, the chief quickly pulled the remaining teens out of the air and ordered them back to the hall. Granted the Dragon Corps was out of commission due to their old battle plan being brought up with stealth in mind leading to them leaving the dragons behind. Stoick and Gobber quickly formed hypothetical battle plans, and since they were sorely out of plans, they followed the only idea they had and prayed to the gods that it would work. The remaining men split into three groups and pushed back the Berserker forces from the east side, west side, and center passages off the village and so far successfully managed to push them back towards the docks.</p>

Stoick's mind raced as they drove back a few invaders, sending them running back towards the docks. He quickly stopped to catch his breath and rest for a few short moments, wondering what Spitelout and Gobber's divisions were doing and if they ran into Dagur yet. So far, the men Stoick had faced were severely disordered and were likely not following any particular orders or battle plans.

"I'm guessing one or more of their commanding officers were killed or fled," A viking said as he stood next to Stoick. The chief nodded his head and motioned for the rest of his division to continue on pushing the invading forces back. Still, the further they pushed the remaining forces back, the more something prodded in the back of Stoick's mind that he couldn't shake.

"Stoick!" called Gobber as their two divisions met at an intersection. The old viking had a bad cut above his brow but he shrugged it off as nothing too serious.

"We've driven back a majority of their forces and as our meeting means, we are close to the harbors," Gobber said quickly as they moved forward, their divisions combining for the moment. Stoick nodded his head as they moved to the harbour area. Spitelout's division had already arrived, some of the men firing arrows down onto the docks. We had the higher ground and the resources up top to drive them out. Spitelout spotted Stoick and quickly met the two.

"My division just arrived as more Berserker's fled to the docks. I'm guessing that was thanks to you, but, they aren't loading onto their ships and retreating like we thought. They're staying on the docks and are refusing to admit defeat," Spitelout started, "My men have already killed thanks to the higher ground, but they show no sign of defeat or retreat." Stoick scratched his head and walked over to the dock stairway, trying to get a good look at the Berserker's and their behavior. Something wasn't right with the way they moved. It was erratic, thoughtless, and uncoordinated, almost like a bug who just had its head removed. Stoick looked down upon the men he could see and saw no sign of Dagur or anyone giving out orders or commands. It all seemed like a group of vikings with no real objective or motivation, just the will to fight on.

"Gobber, Spitelout, do you see what I'm seeing?" Stoick asked, motioning his men closer to his view. They looked down at the men and saw the unstructured fighting methods they used. The two men watched

with confusion, wondering why they behaved so unpredictably. Spitelout quickly spoke up.

"Stoick, I can confirm it, Dagur isn't among them," He said to his older brother quickly. Stoick took a step back from the edge and tried to figure out where the young chief would even be.

"Had he already fled? No, that's not like him. Could he have been killed? Probably not, he's one dangerous viking, so where could he have gone?" Stoick thought to himself, "What interested the young Berserker while he was on Berk, what did he talk about?" The chief suddenly felt his heart drop in fear.

"..Hiccup...Hiccup! He's going after Hiccup!" Stoick yelled as he ran off towards where he last saw his son, "Stay here you two, you're in charge until I return." The chief yelled over his shoulder until he disappeared around a corner, his heart pumping, his blood frozen over in worry, his mind racing with 'Please be alright's. His feet carried him faster than ever before. Of all the mistakes he'd made in the past, his mind flooded with the possibility it may be the one that kills his son, or worse. His worst fear was slowly coming to light. The fear of being a horrible father and never getting a chance to right the wrongs he made.

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><p>Hiccup watched on as Toothless and Dagur circled around each other slowly waiting for the other to make a move. Both were carefully judging their opponent, waiting to see who would attack first. Eventually they both returned to their original positions, Dagur standing in front of Hiccup and Toothless looking on cautiously.</p>

\_ "If I could just get free!" \_Hiccup thought to himself. The young Night Fury struggled against the vikings pinning him down, feeling himself loosen against their grip. He suddenly felt a strong fist slam into the left side of his head, sending him into a daze. Toothless felt his heart clench when he saw the blood slowly trickle from his Night Fury's nose and he rushed towards Dagur. The viking rushed the dragon and swung his hammer quickly. Toothless swiftly ducked under the hammer and swung his tail into Dagur, sending him sprawling a few feet over before he quickly regained his balance.

"You're not half bad, maybe I will have some fun with you!" Dagur yelled enthusiastically. Hiccup shook his head, trying to regain his senses. He looked on in anger and frustration watching his Night Fury go head to head with this beast. The young Night Fury saw Dagur get a crooked smile as he slowly approached Toothless, his hammer raised in a defensive position. Hiccup opened his mouth and charged up a plasma blast, ready to protect his Night Fury when he felt strong hands slam his mouth down preventing him from firing.

\_ "No! Get off me!" \_Hiccup thought frantically as he saw Dagur and Toothless return to circling one another. Toothless glanced over and saw the fear in his love's eyes. He quickly turned his gaze back to Dagur, growling intensely. Dagur smiled wider as he charged towards the dragon. Toothless waited until the last moment to move out of the way, taking advantage of the moment when Dagur's balance fell short. The Night Fury quickly fired a plasma blast into Dagur, who tried his

best to block it, but sent him flying back a few feet spinning and rolling along the ground before he came to a hard stop against a building. The dragon let out a loud roar and turned to Hiccup's captors, staring at them with hatred that is truly scared Hiccup. He'd never seen his Night Fury like this.

"Ah...ahaha, now it's a battle!" said Dagur, slowly getting up popping his shoulder back into place. Toothless whipped around wide-eyed.

"That should have killed him easily," Toothless whispered out, "That was enough to kill any strong viking." He stared on in disbelief, watching the Berserker viking pop bones back into place. He'd obviously broken one of his hands, but he went on as usual, showing no sign of pain. Toothless guessed the pure adrenaline rushing through his veins was keeping his pain at bay for the most part, but still, to be able to get up after that is quite the feat.

\_ "What?" \_Hiccup thought frantically, \_ "Is he so far off the deep end that he doesn't mind the intense pain he must be feeling?"\_ Hiccup could visibly see where his arm was broken, bent an odd angle. The Berserker merely laughed at the sight as he snapped in bone back into place with a sickening, 'crack.' Hiccup flinched and felt his stomach churn.

Dagur looked on and took advantage of the situation, quickly rushing Toothless and getting a clean uppercut with his hammer, sending the dragon back recoiling in pain. Dagur continued on, landing a kick, another hammer swing sending the Night Fury back with blood dripping from his mouth. Hiccup watched on through terrified eyes watching his Night Fury get beaten up so brutally.

Toothless backed up a feet, getting distance between him and Dagur. The Berserker slowly made his way closer to Toothless, taking his time as if he'd already won. The sadistic gleam in his eyes sent a small chill down the Night Fury's spine. He looked past Dagur and saw the anger and terror that flooded his Night Fury's eyes.

The rising sun just peaked over the horizon, flooding the island with a gentle light that slowly increased. The light shone down on the scene unfolding, Dagur slowly making his way closer to the Night Fury. Toothless let out a fierce roar and charged towards the Berserker, dodging his initial swing and made his way over towards the vikings holding Hiccup down. He suddenly heard a loud snap and a searing pain going through his leg as he fell mid-stride. The Night Fury roared out in pain. He looked down at his back left leg, seeing it look already begin to swell. A hammer lay a foot or two behind him, one that was quickly picked up.

Hiccup looked on in horror, his mind frozen when he heard the snapping of his Night Fury's leg. He screamed through his teeth as hard as he could trying to tell Toothless to get up, to get away. Dagur quickly swung his hammer into the Night Fury's head, sending him to the ground in a daze. Hiccup struggled hard against the vikings who held him down, ignoring the pain from punches and kicks as much as he could. The Berserker chief looked over at Hiccup, laughing at his struggle. He rewarded him for his struggling but kicked the Night Fury several times, eliciting pained grunts and whines from the downed Toothless.

"No! No! No!" Hiccup screamed through his teeth. Dagur slowly turned his head to the young Night Fury, a sadistic smile quickly ripping through his face. He quickly raised the hammer, ready to make the final blow.

Something inside Hiccup snapped as he saw that hammer raising up, the same scene repeating itself throughout his life. The executioner, the Berserker invader, and again with Dagur. With each passing person seeming to get closer to killing his Night Fury. His heart froze, his body reacted on it's own as he pushed off his viking oppressors as he rushed towards Dagur.

"This is the last time...I'm ever going to let you be in harm's way," Hiccup thought to himself as he lunged at Dagur. The Berserker quickly turned and swung the hammer into Hiccup head, sending him sprawling over a few feet.

"What do we got here? A hero huh!" Dagur said sarcastically. The young Night Fury was motionless on the ground, not moving in the slightest. The Berserker approached Hiccup, laughing at the pitiful scene in front of him.

"Such a shame, I expected more of a challenge out of you," He said with disappointment in his voice, "Axe." One of his viking men threw him a large axe coated with a dark red substance.

"Well at the very least I can take home your head!" He shouted happily as he brought the axe up, going in for the kill.

Toothless opened his eyes, the world blurry around him. No long was Dagur standing above him, and he could hear the faint yelling of another viking. He brought his gaze over, seeing Dagur holding an axe in the air over his beloved Hiccup.

"No...mercy," Toothless croaked out as he mustered up his remaining strength to fire a power plasma blast at Dagur. Blood sprayed against the wall, the axe flew off into a nearby house, Dagur's severed arm was burnt and mangled. The Berserker took a few steps back, blood gushing from his sudden wound as he went into shock. The two vikings quickly grabbed their chief.

"He...he blew off my arm...that Night Fury blew off my arm," He whispered intensely, hardly believing that his arm was truly gone.

"Sir, we need to go, you need immediate attention for that wound!" One of the vikings said, picking up their chief as they ran off towards the harbor. Toothless was still in a mild daze but could see his Night Fury a few feet away.

"Hiccup?" Toothless quietly called out. No response was garnered, only the cold motionless body he saw in front of him. He slowly dragged himself over to his Night Fury, seeing his motionless body lying on the ground.

"H-Hiccup?" Toothless asked again, his throat heavy with oncoming tears. The young Night Fury didn't move. Toothless slowly shook his dragon, but nothing was returned. His heart sunk, his mind stopped, and tears quickly rushed from his eyes. This couldn't be happening, not now, not ever. He couldn't die, not like this, not when he'd just

got him, not when their life together held so much more ahead of them. He promised he wouldn't.

"Hiccup!" He yelled at the motionless dragon, "You promised me! You promised me Hiccup!" The dragon's roar echoed throughout Berk, the pain and suffering easily heard from around the village. Eyes quickly turned to the sky, wondering where it was coming from. Gobber and Spitelout looked at each other, their blood running cold hearing the horrible roaring echoing across the island. Astrid and the other viking teens looked out of the great hall doors, their hearts broken hearing the roars of pain. The young viking girl brought hand to her mouth as tears slowly dripped down her face.

"Please no...Hiccup," she whispered out. The other vikings quickly turned to her, hearing her silent words. She ran out the hall doors with Stormfly closely behind her, the other vikings and their dragons quickly followed after.

"Don't do this to me Hiccup!" The dragon roared loudly, shaking his love, dragging him into his arms and embrace, "You can't do this! I love you Hiccup, you can't leave me!" His tears slowly dripped onto the young Night Fury's face. He looked so peaceful.

Stoick rushed around the corner and saw the two Night Furies in the light of the rising sun. His heart quickly dropped.

"Which one is it?" He frantically thought as he ran towards the two. His eyes widened as he slumped to his knees next to Toothless.

"My son! Not my son!" Stoick yelled out as he brought his hands around his son's face. Toothless looked into the old viking's eyes and for the first time he'd known him, he saw defeat. His whole world was taken away from him all because Toothless failed to protect him. The viking looked down at his son's lifeless body, his heart becoming weaker by the passing second.

"I failed...I failed you Hiccup, I failed you Stoick," Toothless whispered out, tears dripping slowly onto his Night Fury. Stoick brought his hand around Toothless as he brought him closer, both of them mourning over their loss. Astrid and the other teens turned around the corner and saw the three figures in the dark. Her heart froze, and she stood trembling where she was.

"This...can't be happening," Astrid whispered out. Stormfly watched on with an open mouth, unable to comprehend the situation.

"H-Hiccup?" Fishlegs croaked out. Meatlug's eyes widened as she slowly backed away from the scene. The twins and their Zippleback stayed silent, shock filling their body rendering them unable to do anything but stare on

"No," Snotlout said as he slumped against Hookfang.

Toothless held on tightly to his Night Fury, wanting him back so badly, wanting life to return to normal. He'd just gotten his love only for him to be ripped away. He couldn't protect him. He couldn't keep the promise he made with himself. This couldn't be how their story together ends. It just wasn't right.

"I love you so much Hiccup," Toothless whispered out. It was then he noticed Hiccup's faint breathing.

#### 14. Chapter 14

Hiccup woke with a start, his head pounding, and he quickly raised a hand to slowly rub his forehead. He felt memories like a dream start to slip away and in a few moments, they were gone. Hiccup pushed himself off of his bed, popping his neck before he fixed the metal leg to his stump. The light of morning barely shone through his open window, the rising sun slowly creeping up in the distance over the mountains of Berk. It occurred to Hiccup that this was the first morning in a while that he hadn't been woken up by Toothless, but wrote it off when he saw the Night Fury sleeping peacefully in his usual place by the window. Hiccup quietly walked out of his room and down the stairs.

"Dad?" The young boy whispered out. The room was empty save for a small fire going that dimly lit the room.

"Probably out for morning patrols again," Hiccup said to himself quietly as he picked up his fur coat from the door as he headed out the door. It was unusually hot out, especially for Berk so the young viking backtracked to put the coat back. The air was thick and humid, signaling an incoming storm. Something struck the young viking as odd however, the lack of sound that emanated from the village. Granted it was early but he expected some activity going on in the village by this time. It made Hiccup a little uneasy as he made his way down to the market, hearing and seeing nobody around.

"Maybe it's earlier than I thought?" Hiccup questioned himself. Surely he'd run into somebody once he reached the market, and sure enough, there were a few villagers walking through the stalls. The uneasy feeling didn't seem to lift from Hiccup and he started to worry why. Everything seemed fine, was there something he only saw subconsciously? The young viking started doubting himself.

"It feels like...I should remember something...something important, but what?" The young viking said to himself. He felt a sudden nudge on the back, hearing his father's voice behind him.

"Remember?" Stoick's voice said in its usual lightness, "Remember what?" Hiccup shook his head slightly, feeling a bit surprised his father was here. Normally he'd easily hear or see his father coming, but he just seemed to be there.

"Oh, it's nothing. Where have you been? I'm guessing you were out on patrol?" Hiccup asked while walking with his father through the market. He noticed Stoick shaking his head slightly.

"I'm just getting used to life again," He said quietly, not taking his eyes off of the rising sun. Hiccup tilted his head a bit, confused by the statement.

"Getting used to life again?" Hiccup thought to himself, "What's that supposed to mean." The further they walked on, the more his head seemed to hurt. Stoick noticed his son's slight wincing and put his hand on his son's shoulder.

"You okay son?" He said in his usual light voice again. Hiccup nodded his head and smiled a bit to show he was okay. Truth is, he was far from it. Something wasn't right. The way the air felt, the stale smell in the breeze, the strangely gripping humidity, and the vacant atmosphere the village gave off. He felt a pit in his stomach form quickly as if something traumatic just happened, something terrifying, scarring, and depressing.

"Dad I think I'm gonna head home," He said quietly to Stoick as he turned to head back to home. Stoick looked at his son with concern but nodded quickly as they both parted ways. It just kept plaguing his mind, something was missing, something big that he couldn't remember. All he knew at this point was that something was really wrong. It was too peaceful, too quiet. The dragons were making much of a fuss as they usually would and villagers and vikings seemed scarce the farther he walked. Hiccup's worries faded a bit when he entered the market. On the other side he could see Astrid buying some fruit and a viking by the name of Osmond selling to her. They both had genuine smiles on their faces as they both went about on her day.

"Astrid!" Hiccup called out as he started his way across the market. His worry returned when he saw Astrid and Osmond's smiles quickly fade as they saw the young viking approaching. Hiccup strained his eyes as it seemed Astrid was saying something to him but he couldn't quiet hear or see what she was saying.

"What?" He called out, but the young girl just turned away and walked out of the market disappearing from Hiccup's view. He felt his heart sink a little, the first normal situation he came across today only for it to end up not being one. Hiccup looked over to Osmond who had started counting stock at his small stall. Hiccup noticed the fruit that Astrid had just bought were still on the counter.

"Your," Hiccup whispered to himself before trailing off. He thought about grabbing the fruit and going after Astrid, but he felt that wasn't what he should be doing. He stuck his hands in his pockets and walked slowly home, only seeing a villager or two as he passed by their wooden houses. They would give him the same look Astrid gave him and say something quietly once they thought he was out of earshot, though he never quiet heard what they were saying. Hiccup climbed the stairway leading to his home. He could have sworn something called him out so he quickly turned back, but saw nothing. Hiccup stayed staring into the village, the taste of iron suddenly coming into his mouth.

\_ "Iron?" \_the young viking thought to himself confused. He shook it off and continued on his way when he didn't see anyone or hear anything else. Hiccup pushed against the door and made his way in, stopping by the kitchen area to grab some bread. It tasted a bit stale and hard, but he ate it anyway, not really caring. He walked up the stairs and into this bedroom, seeing Toothless still sleeping. Now that wasn't right.

"Toothless?" Hiccup said as he approached his Night Fury, bending down to get closer. The dragon fidgeted a bit, but didn't respond. He poked his dragon on the forehead to wake him up as it usually worked for when he refused to get up. Toothless growled slightly and rolled and layed on his other side.

"Fine, if you wanna sleep in for a change, go ahead," Hiccup said to the stubborn dragon, "Of course you choose to sleep in the day I get up early." When nothing to do since his dragon refused to get up, he went over to his desk to draw or make some sort of design. Out of habit, he flipped quickly to the freshest page of his sketchbook and he pulled the charcoal pencil out of the binding. He flipped through pages and stopped when he thought he saw a giant charcoal mess on one of the pages. He turned back a few pages and sure enough, there was a giant arrow messily scribbled into the page.

"When and why did I do this?" Hiccup said to himself, he flipped through the pages some more, finding a giant hammer scribbled into another page.

"An arrow and a hammer?" Hiccup thought to himself, as he flipped through the pages, but didn't find anymore scribblings, just blank pages, "I don't quite understand." He shrugged it off and settled on a nice clean page. He put pencil to paper and started to draw out, not really paying too much attention to what he was doing.

"Why does everything seem off?" Hiccup thought to himself, "I could see a slow day where no one gets out much, probably from the heat, but why would I be getting those stares. Why is the air so different? Why do I feel different? Why are people acting different?" Thoughts continually plague the young viking's mind and before he knew it, he'd sketched out a scene.

"What is this?" he said loudly as he looked down at his page. He'd drawn a grizzly scene. It was somewhere in the village where a few men were dead on the ground, blood coating the streets, and arrows in their backs.

"Why did I draw this?" Hiccup said to himself as he stared down at his drawing. He heard loud footsteps coming up towards his room. Hiccup quickly closed his book and pushed it off to the side.

"Hiccup?" His father voice said as he lightly knocked on this door. Hiccup got up and opened the door for his dad, letting him in.

"Yeah?" he said as nonchalantly as possible. His dad raised a brow and looked around the room.

"Did you yell?" Stoick said, looking down at the sleeping Night Fury who's ears had perked up a bit.

"No, well yes, I stubbed my toe on the bench," Hiccup lied, smiling uncomfortably. Stoick gave him a look of disbelief but nodded and backed out of the room.

"Just remember that I'm leaving later today for a summit over at the Promise islands," Stoick said sternly as he descended the stairs, "I came back to say goodbye just incase I don't see you again today. Promise me you won't get into any trouble while I'm gone."

"Promise," Hiccup said as he watched his dad pick up a bag lying on the ground by the door and walk out. Hiccup closed his door and went over to his dragon who was definitely awake, but tried to play that

he was asleep. Hiccup slumped down against the back of his Night Fury, feeling the dragon's strong heartbeat.

"Toothless, I've gotta be honest," Hiccup whispered out, "I'm a little scared. Something isn't right. I don't feel right. The world doesn't feel right." Hiccup ran his fingers through his hair trying to figure out what was so different about his normal life.

"Why does everything feel like a lie?" Hiccup said quietly, leaning back against his dragon. The young viking felt as if it were on the tip of his tongue, something he needed to desperately remember.

An arrow and a hammer. The villager's quiet words. Astrid as she mouthed out something before she disappeared. The scene he drew. The feelings of dread and terror.

"Remember?" Stoick's voice said in its usual lightness.

"Your," Hiccup whispered to himself before trailing off.

"Promise," Hiccup said as he watched his dad pick up a bag lying on the ground by the door and walk out.

"Remember your promise?" Hiccup suddenly said to himself, "Where did that come from?" It just sorta slipped out, the words that seemed to literally be on the tip of his tongue. He felt Toothless shift and he turned to look at his Night Fury, seeing his emerald eyes staring deeply into his. Hiccup closed his eyes and shook his head. When he opened them, he was staring at the cobblestone ground of the village streets, his body that of a Night Fury's. Hiccup quickly looked up to see Toothless a few feet away, staring intently at Hiccup. The young Night Fury looked closer and saw tears streaming down the dragon's face and a sadness he'd never seen before in his eyes. The streets were coated with blood splatters and pools where bodies of vikings lay motionless. Arrows scattered across the streets, dotting the surface like flowers in a field. There was a large hammer in between the two dragons, one coated with a thick layer of dried blood.

"What is this?" Hiccup whispered out, mortified by his gruesome surroundings. He quickly looked up at his Night Fury who had a look of complete dread in his eyes. Toothless mouthed something out before turning away from Hiccup, never taking his gaze off of the young Night Fury until he finally looked away towards the red sunset until he was a silhouette in the light.

"Wait!" Hiccup yelled as he ran towards his dragon. The further he ran, the farther Toothless seemed to get. The ground suddenly began to crumble away under his feet as he was plunged into darkness.

"Remember your promise."

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup jolted up with start. His head was pounding but he shook it off. He was back home, the home he and his Night Fury shared. He quickly realized he was lying on some sort of bed made for a dragon.</p>

"What happened," Hiccup said quietly, not entirely sure what was

going on. The room was empty and he heard no sounds from anywhere in the house. He slowly got up, get a little dizzy but shaking it off. The young Night Fury made his way over to the door, slowly pushing it open. The soft creaking of the wood made Hiccup a little more aware of his surroundings as he almost walked into a low hanging shelf. Hiccup recoiled slightly and continued on and down the stairs. The house was empty but had a warm and inviting feeling in the atmosphere.

"Toothless?" Hiccup whispered out once he reached the bottom of the stairs. No response, the house really was empty. The young Night Fury slowly approached the fire pit and threw a few logs into it and tried his hardest to create some fire and succeeded in doing so after a few failed attempts. Once the fire was going, he sat back and stared into the fire. The last thing he remember for sure was looking out into the setting sun seeing a dozen ships approaching Berk, but for what reason? Who did the ships belong to? Hiccup turned his head, hearing footsteps coming closer towards the door.

Toothless walked in and set down some fish on a counter and turned to see Hiccup sitting by the fire. His heart dropped when he saw his love sitting their so innocently.

"Hiccup?" Toothless managed to whisper out as he slowly approached the confused Night Fury. Hiccup cocked his head to the side and stared at him confused.

"What? Did I do something wrong?" Hiccup said very confused by that point as he watched the Night Fury walk towards him. Once the two were face to face, toothless being a good foot taller. The Night Fury quickly hugged Hiccup and brought him in close and tight. Hiccup could feel his shoulder getting wet.

"I thought you'd never wake up," Toothless said through his crying, "I was so scared you broke your promise." Hiccup was really confused at this point. Why was Toothless so close, not that he was complaining, but why? What did he miss?

"What promise did I make?" Hiccup asked after a little while of being held in the dragon's embrace. The crying slowly died down as he pushed Hiccup away some, staring down into his eyes.

"You promised you wouldn't leave me, you promised me you wouldn't die," Toothless whispered out as he stared into his love's eyes. Hiccup could see the love, warmth, and pure happiness that radiated from those eyes. What had he missed?

"I dont...really remember too much bud," Hiccup said, averting his gaze elsewhere. He glanced back and saw that the happiness faded and was replaced with a sad stare.

"How much do you remember?" Toothless asked quietly after what seemed like an eternity of silence between them. Hiccup thought back and tried to recall the most recent memory when it suddenly hit him.

"You said you loved me," Hiccup whispered out with a soft smile on his face.

"That's right...he said he loved me...and I love him," Hiccup thought

to himself. He looked up and saw that happy look return to his Night Fury's face.

Then Hiccup started remembering more. The young Night Fury clutched his head as the horrible memories came flooding back to him. He started screaming out in agony from the gruesome scenes and dreadful emotions he felt flying through his body.

"Make it stop! Make it stop!" Hiccup yelled out, "Make them go away! Make the memories stop!" Toothless quickly grabbed his Night Fury, bringing him in close.

"It'll be okay Hiccup, it's all going to be okay. I'm right here, sh sh sh," Toothless said, calming Hiccup down. The young Night Fury curled into Toothless, silent tears falling down his cheek.

"There was so much blood," Hiccup whispered out. Toothless closed his eyes and nuzzled into his dragon.

"I know, I know. It's all over now, okay? I'm here, I won't let anything happen to you," Toothless whispered. Hiccup slowly nodded and nuzzled into his Night Fury's neck as he felt soft rhythmic licks go across his head. The young Night Fury started to purr subconsciously, feeling safe and happy. This is where he felt he belonged, in the embrace of his love. All seemed right in the world regardless of how destructive and dangerous it really was, for the moments they spent together seemed to last a thousand years and brought them both to so close.

Hiccup slowly brought his gaze up to meet his Night Fury's and after a few short seconds, the two Night Furies slowly and delicately kissed.

## 15. Chapter 15

The days following the failed invasion of Berk by the Berserker armada were particularly difficult for Toothless. Not only did he have to see the blood stained ground every time he left the house, he had to deal with the grim atmosphere the village seemed to radiate with and the fear that he'd lose the dragon he loved. It seemed as if everywhere he went, a family or friend was weeping over a dead comrade and of course that would be accompanied by the dreadful thought that what if Toothless hadn't stopped Dagur in time. It was very difficult seeing the sadness around him and in him, knowing that people he saw everyday in the streets or said hi to as he passed their homes would never been seen again. They were gone forever. Toothless was so happy that his Night Fury woke up that day and quickly embraced him, showering him with love and attention. They stayed in each others embrace and company for a long while before they broke off and started to talk of the days the young Night Fury missed.

Hiccup was quickly informed that he'd been unconscious for three days and he was in a short coma from what the village healer had said. If he were human, he'd never wake up, but dragon's heal quick and with a little bit of luck, he pulled through and very quickly at that. The healer and Toothless were thoroughly surprised that he woke up so quickly. Granted the healer had no idea how dragons worked or how quickly he healed, but she was still happy that the young Night Fury

came through with only bad memories. Well, horrible memories he'd rather forget all together. Something told Hiccup he'd never forget arrows piercing into a person, a Berserker's body mutilated beyond comprehensions, and several murdered vikings he saw everyday working with his father. All this happened on the whim of a young chief who was mentally unstable at his best.

One thing Hiccup wouldn't forget is the despair in Gobber's eyes the first time he saw him after he'd woken up. The defeat, the pain, the depression that flooded his eyes was unbearable. Hiccup couldn't stand seeing his former mentor like this, though he understood why. From what Stoick had told him, after the invaders were sure to have retreated and left the island, the clean up began. It went that Gobber was part of a team that were tasked with finding survivors and taking care of any bodies and prepping them for burial later that day. He'd found Ulfrik, the skinny viking who he'd been sharing love letters with. If it wasn't heartbreaking enough to find your love dead in the street with several arrows in his back, he'd found one last love letter that he was out delivering when he must have heard the war bells begin to ring. Gobber still had the letter with him, kept in his breast pocket close to his heart. The old viking tried to keep himself as busy as possible with work and went through several remakes of Toothless' tail fin to accommodate the dragon.

Hiccup missed the burial ceremony and a lot of the gatherings for the fallen vikings and slain villagers. The teens who had guarded the hall were given recognition along with the brave men and women who defend their home from the invading Berserkers. The town was dim with the grim battle and death, but alive and prospering at the same time through the triumph over the Berserkers and the victory that ran through the veins of each citizen of Berk. Toothless had comforted the young Night Fury after he had woken, filling him in on the events that unfolded the last few days. Of course, shortly after the invaders had left and Hiccup was being tended too, some of the more...stubborn vikings, blamed Toothless yet again for their misfortune, claiming that the spawn of lighting and death itself is the calling card for all the evil in the world. Toothless didn't quite know what to do, his love had been in a coma, he was frantic and irrational with worry, growling at anyone who came near Hiccup unless it was someone he truly trusted. Stoick was the last person Toothless expected to rush to his defense, but sure enough, the chief quickly dispelled any harsh emotions towards the two Night Furies and if any problems were to arise, he'd be sure to issue out a swift and hard punishment.

It had been only three hours since Hiccup had woken up. So far he'd been through the village and seen the memorials, met up with the despaired Gobber, and said hello to some worried villagers. The first thing Hiccup really wanted to do was go home with his dragon and rest in his company, just enjoying their sweet time together. Their relationship had definitely been a hectic one. Starting to date as soon as an invasion occurred might have been the most unfortunate thing to happen, but, it wasn't those events that scared Hiccup, it was talking to his father, his friends, and to the village about it.

"How are they going to understand Toothless? I mean, this is insane!" Hiccup said to his Night Fury as they slowly approached their old home overlooking the village, "Not only did I magically turn into a dragon, but I fell in love with one! Do you realize how completely

insane that sounds? If I were a human and told that story, I'd surely be strapped to a boat and shipped off to sea! No one is going to be onboard with this!" Toothless stared at his love with interested eyes, seeing how frantic his dragon had become, nudging him slightly.

"Hiccup? Hiccup, breathe, you need air. Just breathe, everything is going to be fine okay?" Toothless said with a smile on his face. The Night Fury brought his wing up and wrapped it around Hiccup, bringing them closer together. Hiccup blushed slightly and averted his eyes at the contact, it feeling different now that the two were a couple.

"I'm breathing, I'm calm, I'm cool, I'm...I'm fine," Hiccup said quietly as they reached the door. Toothless looked over at his Night Fury, noticing the hesitation and doubt in his eyes. His breathing was slow and heavy and Toothless swore he could hear his heartbeat from beside him. He could visibly see his dragon trembling, terrified of what was to come.

"Hiccup, it's going to be alright. He loves you and he wants you to be happy okay?" Toothless whispered to Hiccup. The young Night Fury glanced over to him and nodded slightly. Hiccup drew close to the door and slowly knocked hard four times. There wasn't an immediate response, but after a while he could hear slow footsteps getting closer to the door. After a few moments of silence, the door quietly opened. Stoick looked out and saw nothing but Toothless a few feet away until he looked down, seeing his son sitting in front of him. Stoick suddenly grabbed the young Night Fury and brought him into a big hug.

"You scared me as badly as last time," Stoick whispered into his son's ear, "I thought I lost more of my son than just a foot." Hiccup nodded his head and hugged his father back, happy for the closeness they shared knowing it wouldn't last long before Hiccup began to get uneasy around him. For now, he was the dad he'd always known. Stoick slowly let go off his son and took a step back, gesturing for the two to come in.

"Don't just stand out here, come right in," Stoick said in a happy and cheerful tone Hiccup rarely heard. The two Night Furies made their way into the living area and sat down around the fire pit. Stoick shut the door quietly and turned towards the two dragon's, a smile on his face as he sat down.

"So, tell me what exactly is going on?" Stoick said softly, giving them a quizzical look. Hiccup was a little shocked at the calm reaction he was getting from his father. Surely he was about to blow at anytime, but was trying his hardest to keep calm.

"Er, uhm," Hiccup stuttered a bit, hoping for some support from Toothless. The Night Fury stared at him and shrugged.

"What? He can't understand me," Toothless said as-a-matter-of-factly. Hiccup gave him a sharp look before turning his attention back to his father who'd remained still and staring at the two.

"Well, uh, we kind of, might be, in a relationship...I guess," Hiccup said, trying to make the impact seem less surprising, which probably didn't work at all. Stoick slowly nodded his head, not taking his

gaze off of the two dragons. Hiccup really didn't know what to say at this point, it could go either way but the intense silence was killing everyone in the room.

"I can honestly say Hiccup," Stoick started off in a light tone, "That was the last thing I'd expect to come out of this whole thing." The chief had an interested smile on his face as if he didn't really know how to respond to the situation. He shifted uneasily as if trying to get more comfortable in his chair, pulling at his shirt collar a bit.

"I mean, it's not the craziest thing in the world. You did manage to pull off becoming a dragon and you certainly played that off like a champ. If you were still a human and you two had become...a couple, it'd be a lot stranger and harder to except than this. Okay, granted this already is hard to except, I mean, how often does your first born child turn into a dragon?" Stoick said, laughing hoping to lighten the mood. Hiccup nodded his head with a small smile on his face. Toothless didn't know what to do so he watched Hiccup and did what his dragon did. This, of course, amused Stoick to no end.

"So...are you okay with this?" Hiccup asked with a hint of fear in his voice, hoping he hadn't misread the situation. Stoick just leaned back a bit in his chair and stared at the two dragons, shaking his head a bit in disbelief.

"Hiccup, at this point, I stopped arguing with you. If it's my approval your looking for, you've certainly got it. I stopped questioning you a while ago son. The day I almost killed Toothless, I pretty much just stopped trying to judge every little thing and jump to the nearest conclusion," Stoick said lightly as he nodded his head. Hiccup cocked his head slightly, a bit confused by his father.

"After all you've said and done, you're just going to accept it this easily?" Hiccup asked quietly. Stoick's smile slowly faded as he brought himself close to the dim fire going, staring intently into it. The chief nodded his head slightly and brought his gaze back to the Night Furies.

"It's the fact that I know what I've said and done that allows me to say that I'm okay with anything you do. I know that I messed up, I messed up badly. If it wasn't almost getting our entire island killed by a giant dragon, it was almost killing my son's best friend. I have to face my own pride and stupidity at some point, son, and it's better now than later," Stoick said with a strong voice, "Right now, I trust that dragon with your life. He's protected you from many troubles in the past and I expect that he continues to do so by your side for many more years to come. Now, you both tend to get in trouble, but I have faith he'll pull you out of it, well, most of you." Stoick winked at the boys with a light laughter in his voice. Hiccup slowly nodded his head, smiling.

"Thank you so much," Hiccup said quietly, leaning into Toothless letting out a short and light laugh. Toothless smiled at his dragon and nodded at him.

"Can you tell him that I'll do my best? I promise to protect you until my last breath Hiccup," Toothless said, licking his partner's

head lightly. Hiccup shook his head quickly, very embarrassed from getting affection in front of his father. Toothless looked on with amusement while Stoick watched with interested eyes, looking at how the two interacted. The chief nodded his head, and smiled, the pair reminding him of the life he had with his wife before a dragon took her way from him. It was strange how the two reminded him of their relationship, but the hands of destiny were made that way he guessed.

"Toothless said he'll do his best, and that...that he'll protect me until his last breath," Hiccup said, almost whispering out the last part. Stoick smiled gently and nodded his head slowly. Hiccup looked over to his Night Fury, a happy glint in his eyes. Toothless could see the relief that flooded throughout his dragon's eyes and smiled sweetly to his Hiccup. As soon as the relief rushed into those eyes, they were replaced with another layer of fear. Hiccup quickly turned back to his father, his voice shaking subtly.

"Uh, Dad...what am I supposed to tell the village? I really doubt they'll be as understanding considering that some of them are still very uneasy and against the fact that dragon's are even considered an ally, let alone live among us in the village," Hiccup asked quietly. He easily remembered the day he tried to convince them that dragons weren't their enemies and how quickly that got out of hand and almost got him killed in the process. Stoick got up from his seat and approached his son, putting his large hand on the dragon's shoulder.

"Son, I'll take care of it. This isn't something you should have to worry about. If people don't like it, that's their own problem, not yours, not anybody else's. I will personally make sure that no harm comes to you or your dragon," Stoick said calmly. Hiccup looked up at his father, seeing the love in his father's eyes. It was days like this that Hiccup missed, granted he never really got many of these days, seeing the level of care and love in his father's eyes. Sure he saw it, but it never seemed directed towards Hiccup, just towards the actions he took. This time, it felt as if it was genuinely directed towards him.

"Thank you," Hiccup whispered out as he nodded his head. Stoick smiled softly again and made his way towards the door.

"I'm sorry for leaving so suddenly, but I have to attend to a few matters regarding the failed Berserker invasion and their response to the crisis," Stoick said sternly as he opened the door, "If you have anymore questions or want to talk, I'll be back in a few hours, probably around dinner time." With that, the viking chief was out the door on his way to the great hall, leaving the two Night Furies on their own. Toothless leaned into Hiccup and smiled.

"I told you everything was going to be okay," Toothless said before he licked his love's head affectionately. Hiccup smiled and licked his the Night Fury's neck happily.

"I know, I know," Hiccup said admitting his defeat, "We should probably head to the Academy and see if the guys are there." Hiccup hoped that the Academy was up and running again since he'd been out. They were in desperate need of a lead instructor which rotated between Astrid and Fishlegs for the time being. . Until Hiccup could fly, he'd have no way of teaching the anything, and he'd rather not

for a while until people can actually get used to the fact he is indeed, a talking dragon. Hopefully one of them was there so he'd start getting the group together.

"Sure," Toothless said, stretching a bit before they made their way out, "I can't wait for the new tailfin, then we won't have to walk everywhere." The Night Fury looked to the skies as they walked, wishing to take flight again with his rider right by his side. Hiccup saw the longing in his dragon's eyes and felt a rush of guilt come over his body, looking away quickly, trying to focus on the ground in front of him. Toothless looked over expecting to see his Night Fury have the same excited expression he had, but only saw the guilty eyes staring at the ground in front of him that would occasionally glance back at his tail.

"Are you still hung up about that?" Toothless suddenly asked. Hiccup looked at him confused, acting as if nothing was wrong. The Night Fury rolled his eyes and sat down, motioning Hiccup closer. The young Night Fury did and sat in front of him, the two staring into each others eyes for few moments in relative silence.

"Look, don't worry about my tail. Don't think that I hate you or have some sort of grudge against you for taking away my flight," Toothless said soothingly, "You wanna know why? Because it gave me the chance to know someone incredible." The Night Fury smiled at his smaller companion, nuzzling into his head. Hiccup smiled at the affection and was relieved to hear that his love was fine without his flight for now.

"As long as I have you, I don't care if I ever fly again," Toothless whispered to Hiccup. The young Night Fury looked up into those emerald eyes of his, his heart bursting at the seams hearing his dragon talk like that. The two dragon's slowly leaned into one another, feeling the other's breath and taking in each other's scent. Hiccup closed his eyes and leaned in close, feeling the soft brush of slow breathing on his lips.

"Am I interrupting something," said a young female voice. Hiccup snapped his eyes open and quickly turned around, backing a bit into Toothless. The young Night Fury's face became exceedingly blue from embarrassment. Astrid was staring at the two dragon's a brow raised and her arms crossed.

"No! No you weren't!" Hiccup quickly said, trying his hardest to avoid direct eye contact with the young viking. Hiccup could hear Toothless behind him trying to stifle laughter, and it was worse when Astrid started laughing too. This was so embarrassing, but that's what you get for PDA. The young Night Fury stepped on Toothless' foot lightly, getting a small 'ow' from the dragon.

"You're not helping!" Hiccup said to the dragon annoyed. This only caused Toothless to start laughing harder. Hiccup took a deep breath and approached Astrid, trying his hardest to ignore the current situation.

"I'm guessing Fishlegs is at the Academy?" Hiccup asked quickly, still trying to avoid eye contact with the girl. Astrid nodded quickly, biting her lip to keep from laughing at his embarrassment. Hiccup let out a small sigh and quickly turned away from the girl, stalking off towards the Academy. Toothless winked at Astrid and

motioned for her to follow.

\* \* \*

><p>The trio made their way into the Dragon Academy, hearing the twins fighting as usual. Hiccup didn't expect them to be there, but sure enough, they were bickering over something small while Fishlegs tried to clean up the area after the noon training session. The trio heard the sound of flapping come closer to the arena, and soon enough, Snotlout entered the Academy with Hookfang who promptly threw him off when they landed, prompting snickering among the group.</p>

"It looks like everyone is here, how convenient," \_Hiccup thought to himself,\_ "Now I hope they conveniently go along with this."\_

"Can I talk to you all?" Hiccup asked, motioning for everyone to come close. The young vikings looked at each other as the slowly made their way over to the trio. Hiccup shifted uncomfortably and moved a bit closer to Toothless for a bit of much needed comfort and support. The Night Fury smiled as his companion.

"It's going to be fine," Toothless whispered to his companion. Hiccup smiled softly and nodded his head lightly. Once everyone was together, Hiccup had trouble finding his words, but eventually he managed to squeak something out.

"So, we talked about this before...I think, I can't really remember too well, but Toothless said we did. You know, about our, uh, relationship," Hiccup said, closing his eyes and looking towards the ground at the last part, honestly too embarrassed to talk about his love life with his friends. He could hear the soft whispers being passed around between the vikings.

"I really don't care about your love life. If he makes this whole thing easier, then whatever," Snotlout said, walking away to find something better to do than spend time of this gross sentimentality. The twins looked at each other and shrugged and returned their attention to Hiccup.

"Its not any of our business," Tuffnut said, "I know we normally make things our business, but, not this time...I think."

"I'm pretty sure we don't really care who you date, as long as it isn't Tuffnut, I'm fine. Who'd want to date that ugly mug right?" Ruffnut said, punching her brother in the arm before they walked over pushing and shoving each other.

"You do remember we're twins right?" Tuffnut said as they went off into the distance towards an axe rack which could only end badly.

Last was Fishlegs who gave them an uneasy look.

"I don't really know about this, I mean, it's really weird. I know you are also a dragon, but that's weirder than this. It's just all so unreal to me. For one, this change you went through is completely impossible, but somehow the Gods made it happen. For two, it hasn't been that long since you've been a dragon and you're already dating another dragon. I couldn't care less if it was a guy or girl, but

this whole thing is just really strange to me," Fishlegs said as he took a step or two back away from the dragons. Hiccup nodded slowly, obviously disappointed that one of his close friends doesn't think too highly of the whole ordeal.

"I hope that you'll accept it a bit more as time comes around," Hiccup said softly. With that, the young Night Fury turned around and walked out of the Academy, happy most of his friends didn't mind, but still had that tinge of sadness from Fishlegs' uneasiness about it. Toothless quickly followed after him, looking back to Astrid who motioned that she was staying. The Night Fury nodded his head before jogging to catch up to Hiccup

"I didn't go how I thought it would, but it still went pretty well overall," Toothless said, nudging into Hiccup. The young Night Fury smiled a bit and pushed back but not really moving him too much. Toothless chuckled a bit and brought his wing around Hiccup, bringing him close. Hiccup leaned into his Night Fury, letting a soft purr ripple through him. For now, all Hiccup wanted to focus on was his Night Fury. He wanted to forget the pain and hardships of the world.

"I'm sure Fishlegs will come around eventually," Hiccup said in a cheerful tone.

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><p>It was getting late on the island of Berk. The two Night Furies stopped by Gobber's shop by his request to refit the tailfin. The smither said it was the final adjustments he needed to make. The next time he would call them in would be the last, the tailfin would be complete. Hiccup could easily see the excitement in his love's eyes after hearing the news and he swore he must've took all the dragon had to keep from jumping all over the place. By the time the two arrived home, it was late in the evening, the stars starting to show in the sky. The two ate dinner and got ready for the night. So far, his first day awake was pretty nice, a little weird since his limbs were pretty stiff, but not too bad.</p>

Toothless was getting comfortable in his room when Hiccup poked his head through the doorway.

"What are you doing?" Hiccup asked. Toothless cocked his head at the question and stared at the young Night Fury in his doorway.

"Going to sleep? Can I not do that anymore?" Toothless asked with a playfulness in his voice. Hiccup smiled and then sat down in the doorway, scratching the back of his head.

"Well, I thought you might like to sleep with me tonight. I mean, that's what we used to do before this, and since we're, uh, dating," Hiccup said, a light blush returning to his cheeks. Toothless smiled softly and nodded his head. He got up and approached his Night Fury and licked his head affectionately.

"Then let's go get some sleep."

"Alright, now hold still," Gobber said hollowly as he attached a new tail fin to Toothless' tail. The Night Fury sat patiently as Gobber strapped the prosthetic tail fin to his tail, tightening and adjusting it. After a few quick tugs, Gobber's grip lightened and fell away. Toothless looked over his shoulder and brought his tail around, looking at the new fin with wide excited eyes. He flexed the fin in and out a few times before giving a smile to Gobber. The old viking nodded slightly and returned to his work as the Night Fury exited the shop. The light of morning barely seeped over the horizon providing a subtle luminosity to the village as Toothless made his way home. With luck, he'd be able to get home before Hiccup awoke and greeting him with the idea of flying.

"This is going to be great," Toothless whispered to himself as he slipped into their home quietly. The wood of the house creaked slightly as he made his way up the stairs. The structure wasn't really made to accommodate to dragons, but it worked enough. Toothless approached the door quietly, pressing his ear against the wood, listening as his love breathed in and out slowly in a deep slumber. The Night Fury pushed against the door, taking soft steps as he approached his sleeping dragon feeling his chest swell with love seeing his Hiccup sleeping peacefully in a curled ball on their makeshift bed. Personally Toothless didn't find it too comfortable, but Hiccup seemed to sleep peacefully on it so he endured.

"Hey," Toothless whispered as he nudged Hiccup slightly. The young Night Fury shifted a bit, slowly opening his eyes. The smaller dragon looked with confusion as his eyes shifted towards the window, seeing light barely gleaming over the horizon.

"What is it? Why'd you wake me up so early?" Hiccup asked, stretching along the bed, pops reverberating off the wooden walls slightly. Toothless smiled happily and nuzzled into Hiccup, bringing his tail up into view flexing the new tail fin for Hiccup too see. The young Night Fury's eyes lit up with excitement as he leaped from the bed.

"Is that where you went?" Hiccup asked, "Can we go now? Please?" Toothless smiled and licked the Night Fury and motioned towards the door.

"After breakfast, I haven't eaten yet and I have a feeling you're going to need the strength," Toothless said, nudging into Hiccup as they made their way towards the door. Hiccup had a look of disappointment on his face, but nodded and smiled at his Night Fury, anxiously awaiting their training.

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><p>Hiccup fell on his back exhausted. The pair had been training for several hours on the edge of the village and his flying hadn't made much progress. He'd figured out how to glide which was a very easy skill overall, however, he didn't have much luck with hover, constantly having his wings go out of sync. Toothless landing next to him softly, a soft breeze from his flapping wings going over the smaller Night Fury.</p>

"I don't really understand. Baby dragons learn how to do it in a matter of minutes," Toothless said, scratching the back of his head, "And I don't understand how you're wing beats are out of sync, that

shouldn't happen." Hiccup breathed a deep sigh and got up, shaking the dirt off of himself.

"Again," Hiccup said as he flapped his wings against the ground, getting his timing together as he rose higher and higher into the air. Toothless sighed to himself as he quickly rose into the air, passing Hiccup in a matter of seconds.

"Remember not to think too hard about it, just fly," Toothless called as he watched the Night Fury rise higher into the air, his eyes twinkling with determination. Hiccup let out a shout of joy as he passed his previous record, forgetting about flying and looking up seeing that he was the same level as Toothless, the two staring into each other's eyes. Toothless smiled happily as his Night Fury seemed to unlock how to fly.

"Now teach me how to move!" Hiccup yelled at Toothless who winced a little from the shouting.

"I'm right in front of you ya know," Toothless said raising a brow at his companion. Hiccup laughed a little and gave an apologetic head tilt.

"Sorry," Hiccup said with a smile, "How do I move forward?" Toothless moved forward a bit and gently nuzzled into Hiccup, pulling himself back a bit to give the dragon room.

"Just move your body where you want to go, it's not too difficult, well, it might for you but," Toothless said teasingly. Hiccup glared at the Night Fury and stuck his tongue out at him playfully. Toothless laughed as he circled around Hiccup, making sure the young Night Fury was moving properly. Hiccup leaned forward slightly and let out a happy laugh as he moved forward. Toothless smiled as he slowly moved with Hiccup, the pair picking up speed as they flew the skies.

"You doing okay?" Toothless asked as they raised higher into the skies. Hiccup nodded happily, feeling the wind on his face the faster they flew. After a few minutes they were well into the air, the island growing smaller behind them as they reached a comfortable speed. Toothless looked over and saw the happiness in his love's eyes.

Hiccup loved feeling the wind blowing on his face as he flew on Toothless' back. The time he spent with his dragon flying over Berk and exploring new places was the one thing he missed most about being human, but now, he could do it again, this time pulling his own weight as the two flew through the skies.

"This is amazing!" Hiccup shouted as he twirled over Toothless. The Night Fury looked with amazement, wondering with this sudden burst of skill had come from, but he guessed it was just luck that he pulled it off the first time.

"Careful now, you're still getting the hang of it. Do not, do anything risky," Toothless scolded as he watched the other dragon dashing through the air ahead of him, worried that Hiccup was going to lose control and plummet to the earth. The smaller Night Fury quickly stopped his screwing around and dropped back to Toothless.

"Maybe when you've got more experience you can mess around," Toothless said with a light smile, happy Hiccup listened to him.

"Sorry, I got carried a bit there," Hiccup said with a nervous laugh. Toothless chuckled a bit and flew closer to him, keeping an eye on his condition. The Night Fury didn't know how much flying Hiccup could endure before his body begins to tire out. Toothless glanced over his shoulder and realized they'd gone a distance away from Berk.

"Let's turn around, it's getting late and we're pretty far from home," Toothless said, as he began to turn around. Hiccup attempted to turn around and faltered a bit, but regained his balance. Once the young Night Fury saw the island in the distance, he nodded his head in agreement as the two made their way back home. Quickly, the island grew larger in size.

"Almost home," Hiccup whispered out, happy from today's progress but exhausted as well. Hiccup felt a sudden cramping in his left wing as he sharply spiraled out of control heading quickly towards the forests below. Hiccup yelled out in pain as his wing locked up. Toothless looked down in horror as he saw his Night Fury hurtling towards the ground.

"Hiccup!" Toothless yelled as he shot down after Hiccup, gaining speed and drawing closer and closer to the dragon.

"Toothless!" Hiccup yelled as his eyes filled with fear with the ground growing closer and closer by the second. He suddenly felt a pressure pulling him back into the air, but the pair were too close to the ground. Toothless tried to slow down as much as possible before wrapping himself around his love, shielding him as they crashed into the ground. Toothless felt his grip on Hiccup go loose and the smaller dragon slipped from him as the two went sprawling into the woods, crashing into small trees and bushes as they went along.

Hiccup closed his eyes and shielded himself the best he could when he felt the presence of Toothless suddenly disappear from around him. The dragon rolled along and bounced sickeningly off of the ground. The young Night Fury came to an abrupt stop against a large boulder, knocking the wind out of him harshly. Hiccup recoiled quickly, gasping for air that didn't seem to come. After a few moments of struggling to breathe, oxygen returned to Hiccup's lungs as he breathed deeply. He got up cautiously and moved around a bit, testing for any major injuries. Besides an aching body, he seemed fine. Hiccup quickly looked around, checking for any signs of Toothless.

"Toothless!" Hiccup called out, "Toothless are you okay?" There was a screeching of a Monstrous Nightmare in the distance, but other than that, no response. Hiccup's breathing became heavier than it already was as his chest filled with worry.

"Oh gods, please let him be okay," Hiccup thought to himself, "I came out fine, just let him be okay!" Hiccup quickly ran around the area and finding a path of rolled out bushes and broken twigs. The young Night Fury's chest filled with fear when he saw the drops of blood

leading away.

"How hard did he come down?" Hiccup thought frantically, following the wreckage to an end. The broken branches and rolled out bushes came to a stop near an old tree, but no sign of Toothless in the area. All that remained was a small puddle of blood.

"Toothless?" Hiccup whispered out in fear, hoping to hear something. The young Night Fury heard the sound of footsteps coming from behind him, the worry in his chest lifting as he ran towards the source.

"Toothless!" Hiccup yelled before he felt a hard thwack against his side, sending him sprawling a few feet over. The young Night Fury was dazed as he stared up into the sky trying to regain his senses. Before he knew it, a Monstrous Nightmare loomed over him, pinning him down. Hiccup looked up in fear as the dragon roared loudly in his face. The young Night Fury took this opportunity to shoot off a plasma blast into the dragon's fast and getting away quickly. Hiccup ran off a few feet before whipping around in time to see a blast of fire heading his way. He quickly ducked under it and rolled to the side, sending off another plasma blast at the Nightmare, unfortunately missing his mark. The Nightmare flew lightly into the air, rushing towards Hiccup. The young Night Fury jumped out of its way, but felt scalding heat rush over his back, pushing him to the ground once more. Hiccup felt himself get flipped over as the Nightmare again roared into his face. Hiccup fired a few more shots off at the Nightmare, all of them missing, using up all of his blasts.

"Toothless!" Hiccup screamed in fear, his body trembling as the Nightmare loomed over him, pinning him hardly to the ground. The dragon slowly brought its head down, staring into Hiccup's eyes with deep anger, growling loudly at the young Night Fury. Hiccup's breathing became heavy and ragged as the Nightmare glared at him.

"Do you have a death-wish?" the Nightmare asked harshly, "I should kill you for being in my territory you little shit." Hiccup stared at the Nightmare, not knowing what to say or do, well, he couldn't do much anyways with the heavy weight of the larger dragon pinning him down. The Nightmare chuckled a bit looking down at the terrified dragon.

"I could'a sworn all the Night Furies would have died out by now," the Nightmare said intrigued, "I'll tell you what, I'll let you walk away from this." Hiccup breathed a soft sigh of relief, wanting to get out of there quickly when he felt the grip on him tighten. Hiccup quickly looked back up at the Nightmare, seeing a wicked smile on the dragon's face.

"But...you are in my territory, I'm not so sure I should let you off the hook so easily. I've never seen a Night Fury up close before...I can certainly say I'm not impressed. Woulda thought you'd be scarier...you look like some lost sheep." He laughed softly to himself and traced a claw around the dragon's neck, indicating that if he tried anything, he would not hesitate to cut the dragon's neck open.

"Toothless! Toothless help! Please! Somebody help!" Hiccup screamed

out, his eyes flushed with panic and worry. He didn't know how to get out of the situation and at this rate, it seemed as though there was no stopping the larger dragon from doing whatever he pleased to the smaller one.

"Ahahaha! Keep screaming kid, no one is coming to help you. It's just you and me," the Nightmare said with a loud laugh, "You know, I have reputation around here! I'm surprised you haven't heard it kid! I don't let people walk away without taking off a limb or two!" He pressed a claw up against his wing, barely cutting into his scales, drawing just a drop or two of blood.

"I'll just take this as a parting gift! How kind of you to let me have it!" He barked out loudly, laughing as he went along, pushing deeper into his tough hide.

"Oh god, no! No! No!" Hiccup screamed out. He felt a sudden hot substance spray across his face. Hiccup stared in shock as the Nightmare above him had a chunk of its neck blown off, leaving it to gasp for air as it fell on its side. It screeched out loudly as it quickly died, letting out one mighty breath with its final act being a hard glare towards the young Night Fury. Hiccup quickly got up and started getting light headed from his heavy breathing and whimpering, his mind racing with all the disgusting scenarios that could've played out had the Nightmare not been killed. The young Night Fury suddenly felt a presence wrap around him tightly.

"No! Please! Don't! Don't!" Hiccup screamed, wanting to get this dragon off of him. Hiccup didn't care who saved him, he just wanted to find Toothless and go home, their home.

"Sh! Hiccup calm down! It's me! It's me!" Toothless yelled back, twisting the Night Fury around to look at him. Hiccup had tears streaming down his face, his eyes were wide with pure terror, his breathing was deep and ragged with an occasional whimper. The young Night Fury quickly hugged Toothless, curling into his body and sobbing loudly. Toothless brought his wings around Hiccup, shielding him from the world.

"He...he...he was...he was...if you..if you didn't make it...he was," Hiccup said before trailing off into a loud cry that echoed throughout the island, bringing his tail around himself defensively as if another dragon was going to try and mutilate him at any time. Toothless hugged his dragon tightly, ignoring the pain from the gash trailing up from his left brow.

"Hiccup, it's going to be okay. I'm here, I won't let anyone hurt you okay?" Toothless whispered to his dragon, licking his head affectionately. Hiccup nodded into the Night Fury's chest and whimpered slightly. The two remained like this for a few minutes, happy for each other's safety and just happy to have each other.

"I thought I attracted trouble when I was human, but as a dragon? First dad tries to kill you...then Dagur attacks and almost kills both of us...and...and that," Hiccup said, his voice trembling by the final two words, still remembering the horrifying feeling of that dragon's claw raking against his scales. Toothless looked down at his dragon, feeling a pit form in his stomach. Hiccup was right, troubling scenarios did seem to happen much more frequently since he changed.

"It's just the way our luck has turned out so far, but it will get better okay? I promise you, I will never let another dragon or human do that to you, ever. I am yours and you are mine, no one touches you and no one touches me. I'm going to make sure that you don't have to fear that happening ever again Hiccup." Toothless said to Hiccup, holding him tightly, "The Gods are throwing us challenges to see if we are really up to the task of defending Berk. I wouldn't be surprised in the slightest if all this was to help prepare you Hiccup. You remember what Elder said, you are the bridge between humans and dragons." Hiccup stared into his dragon's chest, listening to him speak but also feeling his deep powerful heartbeat pumping out life through his Night Fury's body. The young Night Fury nodded slightly in response. Toothless cocked his head to the side, judging Hiccup hadn't been paying much attention. The Night Fury looked up at the sky, noticing the low hanging sun.

"We should get going, can you fly?" Toothless asked cautiously. Hiccup nodded his head slowly and looked up to his dragon, noticing the gash.

"Are you okay? That was my fault wasn't it," Hiccup whispered out, looking back down. Toothless shook his head and nuzzled into Hiccup.

"I got this protecting the one I love. I don't regret it in the slightest," Toothless said with a soft smile on his face. Hiccup looked up and smiled weakly at his dragon. Blood still coated the young Night Fury's face and he'd managed to get a fair amount on Toothless' chest and neck.

"Let's go home and get us both cleaned up," Toothless whispered as he loosened his hug on Hiccup. The Night Fury began to back away when Hiccup pulled him back into a strong hug.

"I'm so happy you're okay," Hiccup whispered, nuzzling into his dragon's neck. Toothless smiled and nuzzled into his Night Fury's head.

"I'm so grateful you're okay," Toothless said quietly, hugging Hiccup back just as strongly.

## 17. Chapter 17

"When can we go flying again?" Hiccup asked excitedly as he strolled down the steps of the house. Toothless had just walked into the home, carry a few bags in his mouth from the market. The Night Fury set the bags down in the kitchen area, sorting things out a bit.

"And why do you want to go flying again?" Toothless asked looking over his shoulder at the young Night Fury who'd made himself comfortable on the other side of the room, staring at the fire going in the fire pit. Hiccup looked up and raised a brow questioningly, trying to mimic Toothless. The Night Fury rolled his eyes, laughing a bit at the interesting face Hiccup made.

"I have to start flying sometime, better sooner or later," Hiccup said quietly but sternly. Toothless slowly stopped sorting through the bags and looked down at his clumsy paws trying to work around the

kitchen. The Night Fury breathed in a deep breath and turned to his dragon.

"It's only been two weeks, are you sure you really want too?" Toothless said with a caring voice, "Last time, after what happened, you didn't leave my side for the first week. Anyone could easily tell you were badly shaken up about something. I mean, that's a horrible first flight if you ask me, and now, you know just how different dragon's and human's are from each other." Hiccup's gaze hadn't moved from the fire, and for once, the young Night Fury's eyes couldn't tell Toothless a thing about what his love was thinking or feeling. They were just blank, empty, a little, no, very off.

"Hiccup?" Toothless asked hesitantly as he drew close to his love. Hiccup blinked a few times and looked up slowly to the approaching Night Fury.

"The fear I felt in those moments where I truly thought that Nightmare was going to do it, it ran so deep. To think that I could've been used like that and most likely even killed afterwards. I was scared because it wasn't you, it was another dragon, it wasn't you," Hiccup whispered out, "That's what scared me the most, it wasn't you, that you'd find me after or even worse, during. He didn't even do anything to me, but I still felt so dirty, so disgusting, so unfaithful, so revolting, so wrong." The young Night Fury had wrapped himself around his dragon, hugging him tightly as if he were afraid he'd be ripped away at any second. Toothless slowly brought his arms around his Night Fury, squeezing him tightly.

"Ever since you changed, you've lived through so much hell in such a short amount of time. All the carnage, death, and intense situations, sometimes I wonder how you even manage it all without just breaking," Toothless whispered to his companion. Hiccup looked up into those emerald eyes that always had that radiant shine to them and smiled a genuine, deep smile to his dragon.

"Because I've had you every step of the way," Hiccup said, nuzzling up against Toothless' neck. The Night Fury looked at his dragon with a feeling of shock which quickly faded and was replaced with a deep warm feeling that flew through him. Toothless brought his paw up under Hiccup's chin, bringing their eyes back together.

"We've been together for many months, but never fully together up until a few weeks ago, yet, I still feel like I've known you all my life Hiccup. I can't remember a morning I didn't love you, an afternoon I didn't think about you, an evening I didn't spend with you, a night I didn't hold you in my embrace. I want to make you happy, show you love and warmth, give you a life worth living, trying my hardest to keep you," Toothless said softly, his grip on Hiccup becoming tighter, "You are my entire life Hiccup and I cannot lose that. I made a vow to protect you, to keep you out of harms way, but so far I've failed you. What good is a dragon who can't protect the one he lives for?" Hiccup stared into those emerald eyes, feeling his heart being tugged from his chest. The young Night Fury slowly smiled and ran a claw over his love's cheek.

"But you've pulled not only me, but both of us out when we got in trouble. I don't want you to ever have to be in danger because of my actions, which seems to get us both into trouble a lot, but you always pull through for both of us and I can't be more thankful for

you. You make me so happy and so grateful that I get to have you. Life before you was horrible, being the disgrace of Berk," Hiccup said quietly, "When I shot you...when I shot you out of the sky, life became so much more, and when I was given this gift, life went farther than I ever imagined it would. If anyone should be worrying, it should be me. I love you, but deep in my mind, there's still the fear that you'll grow to hate me for taking away your flight like that for so long and forcing you to be my partner so you'd be able to fly, that you think I used you." Toothless quickly leaned in and pressed his lips against Hiccup's, trying his best to silence his companion. This kiss was deeper than anything before as if it was one pivotal act of many that would seal their fates together. Toothless pulled away gently, slowly opening his eyes to see the passionate green eyes of his Night Fury.

"I've said it once before, and I'll say it many more times. I'm so grateful you shot me out of the sky that day. I got to meet an incredible boy, pull together two warring species, actually have a family, and fall in love," Toothless said quietly. Hiccup smiled softly, hugging Toothless tightly one last time before breaking off their embrace. The young Night Fury quickly ran for the door and looked over his shoulder.

"So are we gonna fly or?" Hiccup asked. Toothless smiled and chased after his Night Fury out the door. The Night Fury was surprised at how fast the smaller dragon had gotten over the past few weeks and he had a little trouble keeping up with Hiccup's intense pace heading towards their training center at the edge of town. Hiccup slowed down once they reached their special training area and flopped to the ground, breathing heavily. Toothless was quickly behind him, hardly haven broken a sweat.

"H...h...how?" Hiccup managed to say between deep breathes. Toothless smiled and laughed a bit.

"I'm used to it," Toothless said in a happy tone. The Night Fury walked over and layed next to Hiccup, the two of them staring into the bright morning sky. The air felt fresh and clean with the promise of a new day. There was a long silence between the two before Hiccup broke through.

"I don't know why, but we've never brought up your life before. You know pretty much everything in my life, but I've never stopped and got to know you better. I never once asked you your real name, or your age, or anything really. I completely ignored your life," Hiccup said, staring off into the clouds that dotted the sky. Toothless took a deep breath and glanced over at his Night Fury, appreciating the gesture.

"I don't think you'd really want to hear about my depressing life," Toothless said quietly, "It's nothing special and not relevant today." Hiccup rolled into his side and stared at the dragon. Toothless noticed the pair of eyes on him and rolled over as well, staring at his dragon.

"What?" Toothless asked. Hiccup blinked quickly a few times.

"I really do want to hear it," The young Night Fury said, "I want to know you better." Hiccup smiled at his companion, trying his hardest to show he cared. Toothless couldn't help but chuckle a bit at the

unusual smile he was being given.

"If you really want to," Toothless said, clearing his throat a little, "I really don't know too much about my family or any of that sentimental stuff. All I know is that I was born almost sixteen years ago and the farthest I can remember back I was in service for the Red Death. The dragons there called me Lusolith, though, I'm not really sure who gave me that name. I can't really remember too much, not that I'd want to anyways. It was always dull and bleak living in that hole having to feed that beast to survive. Sure, I could've always escaped but rumours always spread about the one who escaped, and sooner or later, the Red Death would hear and send someone out to kill them or bring them back to be punished. I know I had at least a few friends at one point or another. There was Favnir, a male Nightmare who was killed during a raid. Tessith, a female Nadder who just disappeared one day. Inilth, a Terrible Terror who I saw ripped in half and devoured by two Nadders when food was at an all time low. I don't think I can ever forget the horrifying screech as I turned that corner as saw the little guy..." Toothless trailed off, seemingly deep in thought. Hiccup reach a paw out and rubbed Toothless' cheek lovingly.

"We can stop if you want," the young Night Fury said tenderly. Toothless snapped back to his senses and blinked a few times at his love.

"Oh no, it's fine," Toothless said in a bland and quiet voice, "I know one last dragon who I ever actually got close too. Her name was Syrath, one of the...three was it? One of the three Skrills that I knew off in the Red Death hive. She was my only connection to...anything really. She was an old dragon but she was the closest to a mother I've ever known. Syrath claimed to have known my mother but she would never tell me anything, even when I annoyed her half to death." Toothless trailed off again, staring into Hiccup's eyes. The young Night Fury decided to wait a few moments before saying anything. He'd rather let his love go at his own pace.

"That old Skrill died peacefully. I just about cracked her, I almost got her to tell me everything she knew about my mother, but, she just laughed quietly before she really said anything and before I knew it, she closed her eyes for the last time and took her last breath, right in front of me," Toothless said, his eyes clouded with remembrance, "You know, she is probably the only reason I'm alive. I was, and still am, way too trusting of people. I quickly became friends with Favnir and I was too naive to see that he was a murderer, plain and simple. I don't know how I never noticed it before, the slow disappearance of the dragons around us and the sudden increase of food. He never said anything or explained why he smelled of iron at times. I never questioned why Tessith had so many eggs, each seeming to be another species of dragon. I never wondered why Inilth left for days at a time and returned wired on something different each time. I was foolish kid back then. Without Syrath there to protect me, to guide me, I would've been picked apart like Inilth in no time." Toothless took a deep breath, trying his hardest to forget the image that played over and over in his head. Seeing what Dagur did to the vikings, all the death and the carnage, it was next to nothing compared to the horrors of the Hive. Toothless had seen too much by the time he'd reached the young age of ten, and he prayed to the Gods everyday that his Hiccup wouldn't have to share the same burden he had. Toothless pulled himself from his thoughts and saw the slight

tinge of horror that had found its way into Hiccup's eyes.

"Now don't get us dragon's wrong though. I know I've told you some disturbing things about the Hive, but that place had hundreds of dragons living in fear and hunger forcing everyone to the edge. We aren't like that. We aren't just savages who go around raping people who enter our territory to show dominance, or rip each other in half when we're hungry, or go around killing off the competition, or...or..." Toothless didn't know how to continue, where to go from there. The words just seem to fumble out of his mouth, not making much sense as he went along but still hoping his point was being put across, but in the end, he just stopped trying and let out a deep sigh.

"I lost Syrath when I was thirteen, and at that age, I needed to prove my worth to stay alive which is why I joined in on the raids. That's what I've been doing these past few years, stealing to survive another day and hoping for the best until you came along with your fancy trap shooter," Toothless said, reaching out and tapping Hiccup's nose gently, smiling gently. Hiccup looked at his companion, the fear being replaced with concern and worry as if his Night Fury was still in danger, or that the memories of the Hive could be tormenting him.

"Hiccup, this is the happiest I've ever been. Why would I waste time reflecting on a broken and useless past?" Toothless said quietly, "The only memories I need are the ones that I've spent with you." With that, the Night Fury jumped up and flew into the sky, leaving the conversation behind him. He quickly swooped around and motioned for Hiccup to follow him, wanting to have a nice flight with his love. Hiccup hesitate for a moment for a multitude of reasons.

\_ "No dragons are going to touch you," \_Hiccup thought to himself\_, "but what about Toothless? He's had such a horrible life and I never even bothered to ask if he was okay. He never seemed to be phased by the destruction Dagur caused, and yet, I never questioned it...I never noticed how he seemed to flow with the situation...I never noticed the pained look in his eyes that were clouded with a thousand memories he'd rather leave in the past." \_

"Hey!" Toothless yelled, ripping Hiccup from his thoughts. The young Night Fury's gaze shot back to Toothless who had flown a little closer to Hiccup.

"Stop thinking about stuff and come fly with me," Toothless said happily. Hiccup couldn't help but smile seeing his love so happy.

\_ "Even if the past still haunts him, I'll do my best to give him a future that'll take away the pain," \_Hiccup thought to himself, "I'm coming!" The young Night Fury struggled for the first few minutes but steadily got back into the rhythm of flying as the two Night Furies flew off.

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><p>The two dragons flew through the morning skies, wind brushing against their bodies as they moved among the low hanging clouds. It was beginning to feel like things were steadily returning to normal, with a morning flight being part of the usual ritual the pair went

through.<p>

"How are you feeling?" Toothless called out. Hiccup looked over and gazed with a happy smile to his companion.

"I feel fantastic!" Hiccup called out, doing a little twirl in the air. Toothless sharply inhaled, holding his breath until Hiccup came out of the twirl and back into regular flight.

"Please don't do that, you seriously worry me so much," Toothless said sternly. Hiccup rolled his eyes and mouthed out some words.

"Oh come on, what's the worst that could happen," Hiccup said, then quickly regretted his word choice, "Don't answer that." Toothless chuckled a bit, shaking his head lightly. That was when the Night Fury noticed the half destroyed Berk boat that lay drifting through the water.

"Hey Hiccup," Toothless said as he descended lower, trying to get a better look at the scene. Another boat was quickly heading towards the Berk vikings.

"Oh no," Hiccup said as he rushed past Toothless, flying down towards the boat. He could hear some men yelling on the Berk vessel as he drew closer, narrowly dodging an arrow before he made a swift landing on the deck.

"Johan! What are you doing? It's me! It's us!" Hiccup shouted when he saw the familiar face on the deck. The young viking quickly dropped his axe and breathed a sigh of relief.

"Oh thank the Gods, wait, us?" Johan asked when Toothless quickly dropped down behind him, scaring the daylights out of the viking. Hiccup ignored the scene and focused in on the approaching ship, seeing the worn out look of the boat. The young Night Fury quickly looked around the ship, checking for any signs of hull damage or crew injuries.

"Everyone is okay?" Hiccup asked, receiving nods and grunts from around the boat. He nodded his head in a short moment of relief before he turned back towards the approaching ship, with it being close enough to make out the flag that hung over the ship.

"First it's the Berserkers, now the Outcasts," Hiccup said to himself and to anyone who'd care to listen, "The timing is just amazing." The young Night Fury stared at the approaching ship and looked over at Toothless.

"Your thoughts?" Hiccup asked. Toothless looked over at the Outcast ship, judging its size and condition. After a few moments he turned back to Hiccup and drew close to him, sitting himself next to the smaller dragon.

"Judging from the size, it's doubtful we'd run into much resistance and from the condition, I'd say it wouldn't take much from us to bring it down. I should make a quick flyover and grab their attention, use that opportunity to take them by surprise," Toothless said quickly, eyes still glued to the approaching boat. Hiccup nodded his head in agreement.

"I don't really know how much information the Outcasts get, but at the very least, they'll be expecting one Night Fury," Hiccup said, raising his wings up in anticipation for the quarrel ahead. In a few short moments, Toothless was off the boat and headed for the outcast vessel. The Night Fury could see the enemy boat's crew of at least six scrambling about on deck, attempting to prepare themselves from a Night Fury attack. Toothless dropped low from their line of sight before quickly swooping over the boat, sending a few blasts onto the deck, sending a man overboard and putting a good sized hole in the side of the boat. The Night Fury quickly whipped around and saw Hiccup swoop down and land a critical blast on the ship's hull with water quickly flooding onto the boat and within no time the boat was sunk, leaving a few Outcasts to fend for themselves. Hiccup and Toothless regrouped and landed back on the Berk vessel.

"Can you ask them what happened?" Toothless asked as soon as they landed. Hiccup nodded his head and made his way over to Johan who was busy cleaning and repairing.

"Johan, can you tell me what exactly happened?" Hiccup asked. Johan looked over his shoulder and set down his hammer. The young viking popped his shoulder and scratched his chin quickly.

"To tell you the truth, I really don't know what happened. We were out here gathering some fish traps we'd set yesterday and the next thing we know, there's an Outcast ship catapulting boulders at us. We managed to return some fire and damage their ship, but they took out our catapult, so, we just decided to run and hope for the best. We didn't know how many were on the ship and we weren't well prepared for a fight," Johan explained, gesturing to the mildly injured boat and the few men that helped man it. Hiccup easily understood the young viking's reasoning and nodded his head quickly, looking over at Toothless to see if he was satisfied.

"I still don't understand why they attacked in the first place. I mean, what do they have to gain from this?" Toothless asked. Hiccup shook his head slowly, not really sure of the motives that could have spurred such a spontaneous and rash decision.

"I'm sure the Outcasts have heard about the Battle of Berk by now and our victory against the invading Berserkers, so why would they risk getting involved with a tribe that already showed its strength? They're either very dumb, or very clever. They could think we are at our weakest after the battle and hope they could strike while we're down, or, they have an advantage over us that we can't see just yet," Hiccup said. The young Night Fury sat on his haunches at the edge of the boat, staring at the island of Berk that grew larger with each passing minute. Toothless had made himself comfortable next to Hiccup, also looking towards the front of the boat.

"Whatever they're planning, let's be sure to size them up before any real problems come up," Toothless said to his companion, wrapping his tail around him, bringing himself closer.

"We just came out of one battle only to be thrown into another," Hiccup said, cuddling up against Toothless, "but we're both stronger this time bud, and I know we can bring an end to this."

AUTHORS NOTE:

I apologize for the lack of content these past few days. I've been quite busy lately and haven't gotten much time to write, but I've gotten time to think about the story and the structure of the next arc. I won't be posting as frequently, but just know that I want to properly structure and create a good storyline to go on. Thank you all who've stuck with me this far and look forward to many chapters to come!

\* \* \*

><p>It had been a few weeks since the Outcast skirmish with the Berk fishing boat. Since then, no attacks, no sightings, seemingly had been reported of the Outcasts which was highly unusual. At the very least a Berk vessel might see an Outcast boat in the distance watching them closely, but nothing occurred during those slow few weeks. Hiccup had thought up all the possibilities that could result in the lack of Outcast activity ranging from the tribe moving, being killed off, or maybe had just given up, but the young Night Fury knew better than to believe such naive thoughts. The Outcasts would never do any of the theories that Hiccup had come up with, they were just as stubborn, strong, and deadly as the Berk vikings.</p>

"Are you alright?" Toothless asked, pulling Hiccup from his wondering thoughts as he stared at the ground. The young Night Fury shook his head slightly to clear his mind the best he could before looking over at his dragon, smiling and nodding his head. Toothless smiled back and wrapped his tail around the smaller dragon, ushering him in a bit closer.

It was a cool evening on Berk. The two dragons were patiently waiting on the docks as a Berk vessel drew closer to the island, the atmosphere filled with mixed emotions. Hiccup glanced over his shoulder, seeing that a good portion of the village was also waiting patiently for their chief to return from the inter-tribe conference where many of the larger, stronger, and more renown villages came to meet, discussing politics, events, treaties, and many other diplomatic issues. Hiccup always dreaded conferences. He attended one when he was a few years younger and was bored out of his wits from it. Nothing to do but watch old viking bicker of seemingly simple subjects that could be easily disputed with a little bit of reasoning and talking, not just shouting over each other demanding to be heard.

Hiccup realized he had been looking longer than he realized, not just a quick glance. He noticed Astrid tilting her head at him, cocking a brow questioningly at him. She took a few steps forward closer to him with her dragon Stormfly closely behind her. Astrid stood on the side opposite of Toothless, raising an elbow and leaning against Hiccup.

"Something tells me you were having flashbacks of the one time we were forced to go to a conference," Astrid said teasingly. Hiccup rolled his eyes and puffed up his chest and made himself appear bigger.

"Listen here son," Hiccup said, imitating his father's voice, "If the Gods somehow change you from a talking fishbone to a respectable

viking, then you might be the next in line be chief of this village. Try not to tell any of your dragon conquest stories or tales about how you caught a Night Fury once." The young Night Fury did have a pretty good imitation of his dad, and caused quite a few villagers to get a good laugh or chuckle out of the display.

"I heard that!" A loud voice boomed out from the approaching ship, obviously within earshot by now. Hiccup jumped slightly as he slowly turned around with an forced smile and uncomfortable laughter. Stormfly stared down at the young Night Fury, letting out a loud laugh.

"It sucks to be you Hiccup, you just have the worst luck," Stormfly said teasingly. Hiccup had come to know Stormfly pretty well over the past few weeks since he turned into a dragon, and he was not in the least surprised to find that she was almost exactly like Astrid, the perfect pair next to him and Toothless of course. Hiccup stuck his tongue playfully out at the Nadder who returned the gesture, leaving Astrid in the middle trying to decipher the situation, but quickly just assumed she teased Hiccup as usual. If it weren't Hiccup, it'd be Toothless as the Nadder and Night Fury shared a relationship that was almost identical to that of Hiccup and Astrid's.

Hiccup quickly turned back to the approaching boat when he heard a loud sigh come from the docking vessel. The chief grabbed a few bags and carried them off the boat, looking at Hiccup, shaking his head slightly at the teen's childish antics.

"I'm guessing the conference didn't go well considering that something small got him mad," Hiccup said quietly to Toothless who looked down at his smaller Night Fury with understanding eyes.

"I wonder what could've happened," Toothless said with a hint of worry in his voice, "Hopefully he's just mad from dealing with the other tribe leaders, and nothing too serious." Hiccup nodded his head, looking back over at his father who was slowly making his way up the stairs. The young Night Fury motioned for Toothless to follow as they made their way closer to the chief. Walking past the crowd of people, Hiccup saw Fishlegs helping Gobber get materials of the ship and loading them into a cart. Gobber still had the defeated and sad look on him that the old viking never seemed to shake. Fishlegs saw the two Night Furies approaching and scratched his head uncomfortably and tried his best to ignore the two. Hiccup frowned slightly, seeing a once close friend acting so distant, but he shrugged it off, choosing to focus more on Gobber than the teen viking.

"He must've really loved him," Hiccup said quietly as they passed the pair, "Losing a love one is an occupational hazard, but no one expects it to happen to them. It's going to be a while before he's even halfway back to the normal Gobber we know." Toothless nudged Hiccup affectionately, giving the smaller dragon a gentle smile.

"Then let's be sure not to waste a minute together," Toothless said cheerfully, but in truth, it made Hiccup feel a sudden stab of sadness run through him. The young Night Fury couldn't help but think of losing his Night Fury in some way, leaving him all alone again. Toothless immediately noticed this and regretted his words, bringing himself closer to the smaller dragon as they walked on.

"Don't worry, I'm not going anywhere," Toothless said with a small smile. The young Night Fury's uneasiness didn't go away, but did fade quite a bit. Just the thought alone of losing Toothless made Hiccup feel so hollow inside, a feeling he knew all too well back when it was just him. Hiccup was quickly pulled from his thoughts once again when he heard a loud commanding voice booming out from above them.

"Hiccup! Toothless! I need to speak with you immediately!" Stoick's loud voice rang throughout the harbor, with many eyes quickly going up to look at the chief, then turn to look down at the two Night Furies frozen in place, near the base of the stairs. When Stoick looked at the two dragons who hadn't moved a muscle since he called them.

"Immediately as in now!" the chief yelled over his shoulder as he walked away towards the market, and most likely towards his home. The dragons quickly looked at each other and exchanged an uneasy look before they ascended the stairs to follow his father. Once at the top, Hiccup looked down and noticed the other vikings. Those who had gone with Stoick on his conference trip seemed to have the same defeated and angered look that Gobber had, only not as intense, but still very plain to see. Even Spitelout, who at this point would usually be off bragging to Snotlout about his trip, was unusually quiet as he walked towards his home, Snotlout walking uncomfortably behind him. Snotlout saw the Night Fury from his peripheral vision and turned to look at the dragon.

"What's the deal?" Snotlout mouthed out from a distance. Hiccup quickly decoded the lip movements and he made an obvious shrug to show his uneasiness and his lack of knowledge regarding the situation. Snotlout shook his head and mouthed out something insulting that Hiccup didn't quite catch.

"Whatever, I'll find out myself," Snotlout mouthed out as he turned to catch up with his dad some. Hiccup cocked his head some, but ignored the viking turning back to walk with Toothless who had an amused smirk on his face.

"Some things never change," Toothless said, nudging Hiccup slightly. The young Night Fury rolled his eyes and tried to step on his companions feet, but kept missing, and eventually gave up.

"He started it," Hiccup said suddenly, "When we were five."

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><p>Hiccup and Toothless sat in uncomfortable silence watching as Stoick passed about his home. The fire that dimly lit the room crackled every so often, creating an interesting atmosphere. Stoick slowly came to a stop in front of the fire, staring over the flames at the two seated dragons who looked on curiously. The chief let out a low sigh and took a seat in his chair, not taking his eyes off the dragons. Hiccup could see a conflicted expression flash across his father's a few times before he said a word.</p>

"As you could probably tell, the conference didn't go so well," Stoick started, sinking into the chair, "I told the rest of the tribes about the dragons." Hiccup and Toothless' eyes widened in surprise as they stared at the chief.

"You did what?" Hiccup almost yelled, "I understand we needed to tell the other tribes, but why now?" Stoick propped himself up in his chair, making himself appear larger.

"This \_was \_going to be the last conference for a few months before the winter storms. I knew that if I didn't tell them, they'd find out either through the Berserkers, or some other way which would cause us a lot of trouble in the future. I thought it would be best to tell them myself, coming from the source and not able to be changed from another party. As I thought, the tribes took it badly, claiming we had allied ourselves with the enemy. I did try my hardest to think like, well, you and tried to reason with them. They asked how exactly we became allies, and I tried to explain the situation without mentioning you or Toothless. Of course they heard we defeated a Red Death, but they didn't know we did it with dragons. They would have none of it so, I tried to compromise. I told them I would bring a dragon to show them just how friendly, loyal, trustworthy, and amazing they really were," Stoick said, an undertone of regret that transitioned to hope in his voice. Stoick opened his mouth, but no words came out as if he were struggling just to even explain the situation to his son and his dragon. Hiccup quickly picked up on the hesitation, and noticed another conflicted expression flash across his father's face.

"Dad, what did you do?" Hiccup asked quietly. Stoick looked up from the fire and cleared his throat, shifting to get comfortable in the chair, leaning forward a bit.

"The dragon I need to bring is Toothless son, he's the only one—" Stoick started off before getting interrupted by his shocked son.

"What?" Hiccup said loudly, turning to Toothless who didn't have much of an expression on his face.

"He's the only smart enough, loyal enough, and the only dragon I personally trust to bring along," Stoick said sternly, his facial expression changing to that of his usual demanding self. Hiccup shook his head quickly, not wanting Toothless, his dragon, to be put into any sort of danger or be a part of these inter-tribal politics.

"The only dragon you personally \_trust\_? Take me instead, I can actually talk to them, reason with them!" Hiccup said loudly. Toothless brought a wing around his partner and smiled at him gently.

"I expected this once he said he needed a dragon to bring along. Don't worry Hiccup, I'll be fine," Toothless said with his usual lighthearted smile. Hiccup didn't believe a word of it and shook his head.

"Hiccup, listen. If you go, it'll only complicate things even more. Think about it, I'm really don't want to bring Toothless along because of the fact he's a Night Fury, a dragon other tribes have never seen before. I'm just as scared as you both are, but Toothless is the only capable dragon to come along, the only one who can keep himself in check. He's the only dragon on Berk besides you that won't immediately follow his instincts. Believe me when I say that there is no other choice," Stoick said sternly, looking hard at the young

Night Fury who had an expression that seemed on the verge of realization or understanding, "Look, Hiccup, if you come along, you'll only complicate things. Not only are you a Night Fury, but you used to be human, you can talk, and they will definitely not use their heads with this. They will jump to the worst conclusion, they will blame the dragons son." Hiccup quickly jumped to his feet, staring at his father with intense eyes. The air in the room slowly shifted, a change of pace quickly filling the atmosphere leaving Toothless to look on, unable to fully join in on the conversation.

"I don't think you understand! This," Hiccup said, gesturing to his body, "Is the reason I should go! I was made like this by the Gods so that I can be the bridge between humans and dragons! They wouldn't pick me if they weren't confident I would be able to convince people that dragons are just as scared as us! I can't help people if I keep getting trapped at home! Think about it! If I could convince you, the most stubborn person I know that dragons weren't as they seemed, twice at that, I'm pretty confident I could talk some sense into the other leaders! This is my destiny dad! This is the reason I'm here, the purpose that I need to fulfill! I'm the only one who can do this!" Hiccup breathed heavily as he shouted out the final portions of his rant, gaining a wide-eyed stare from his father and Toothless. Neither of them had heard the young Night Fury shout quite like that before with such intensity, confidence, and conviction. Stoick didn't think his son had it in him, but stranger things have happened, and he was looking at the living proof.

"You know how stubborn I am! Even if you say no, I'll still follow you either way! Maybe I'll stow away on the ship, or fly behind you guys, or some crazy scheme with my friends!" Hiccup said quieter and less intense as the small Night Fury's confidence died down a bit. Stoick raised a brow at his son, realizing that he'd have to lock his son up in a jail cell in order to keep him here, and even at that, he'd find a way out and get to them somehow. Sometimes it amazed Stoick just how resourceful his son really was, either it was the teen's doing or one of his friends that helped him out. Stoick laughed a bit, but quickly the light-heartedness left as he sternly look at his son and Toothless. He judged them both, seeing the determination in both the dragon's eyes.

"You do realize this is dangerous," Stoick said quickly, receiving quick nods from the both of them, "I'll let you go." Hiccup let out an triumphant 'yes' before quickly being cut off by his father.

"But, there will be rules, do you understand?" Stoick said hardly, getting a quick nod from his son who quickly noticed the seriousness of the situation, "You will not say anything unless I say it's okay. You will not leave my side or Toothless' for any reason. Do not act out. Keep your opinions to yourself and do not speak out. Stay out of danger..." Stoick went on for a good fifteen minutes, setting restrictions for the young dragon who looked on with determination in his eye, ready to face any challenge thrown his way. Finally, the rant came to an end, with Stoick looking firmly at Toothless.

"You make sure to keep my boy safe," Stoick said, receiving a confident and determined nod from Toothless.

"I'll try my hardest sir," Toothless said, the feeling of promise in his voice flooding throughout the room. Stoick didn't understand anything the dragon said, but did understand what the dragon meant and nodded his head approvingly. After the Red Death, the way Toothless excepted his death if it meant Hiccup could be happy, which was a huge mistake on Stoick's part and he knew it, and seeing the way Toothless tried to shield the boy from the harsh world, especially during the Berserker invasion. Stoick could honestly say at this point, he trusted Toothless with his own life, and the life of his son.

"The four largest tribes are going to be there with many other smaller ones as well. They expect a dragon, so let's be sure they aren't disappointed," Stoick said with a sharp smile, "We leave in four days, get your things ready." Stoick walked towards the door, opening it and beginning to walk out before he took a step back in.

"I almost forgot," Stoick said, taking a step back into the room, "You two haven't heard of any activity about the Outcasts have you?" The two dragons shook their heads, not seeing or hearing anything about the banished tribe since the random attack a few weeks ago. Stoick nodded his head uneasily and gave the two a quick smile before he took another step out the door.

"I've got matters to attend to, you both stay out of trouble," Stoick called over his shoulder as the door slowly close shut, leaving the two dragons nuzzled up to each other as the light slowly faded over the horizon from the dying sun.

"Hiccup, promise me that you won't make any rash decisions, okay?" Toothless said, licking his dragon's head affectionately. Hiccup rolled his eyes a little and puffed out his cheeks in annoyance.

"I don't do it that often," Hiccup said in a hushed voice, leaving Toothless to chuckle a bit.

"I know, I know, but just in case, promise me you'll stay safe," Toothless said quietly, nuzzling into his dragon. Hiccup purred softly and nodded his head.

"I promise, as long as you do too," Hiccup said, licking his dragon's cheek. Toothless smiled gently and nodded his head.

"I promise," The Night Fury said. Hiccup smiled and leaned in closer, feeling the soft push of air coming from his dragon. Toothless leaned in closer, his heart pounding even though they've kissed before. Every time it sent tingles down the dragon's spine and a heat formed in his chest urging him forward. Slowly, and full of promise, the two Night Furies kissed as the final speck of light disappeared over the horizon, leaving nothing but the dim light of the fire to illuminate the room.

## 19. Chapter 19

The steady creaking of wood slowly woke Hiccup from his uneasy sleep. The ship around him swayed gently in the waves of the calm ocean. Hiccup could subtly taste the salt in the air around him, making his mouth water slightly at the interesting flavour. Lightly faintly

flowed in through the floorboards above him allowing the young Night Fury to see his surroundings. A few other vikings were below deck. While the rest were sleeping, one was awake writing in what looked like a journal. Hiccup rubbed his eyes and got a better look, seeing the young viking Johan slip a charcoal pencil into the bindings of the book and slip it into his jacket. Johan slowly got up and stretched a bit before he noticed Hiccup looking in his direction. The young viking smiled and waved the dragon over.

"About time you got up. Toothless went up a while ago, and I guess he wanted you to get more sleep," Johan said, stretching his muscles. Hiccup nodded sleepily, yawning in the process. The young Night Fury got up and stretched his body, feeling the relief muscles losing tension.

"Thanks Johan," Hiccup said quietly as he ascended above deck. Hiccup poked his head up, looking around the deck, seeing a few vikings tending to the ship though lazily at that considering the wonderful condition of the sea. The young Night Fury breathed in deeply, feeling the fresh air flow in and out of his lungs, sending a light smile across the dragon's face. Hiccup pulled himself up and sat on deck, looking into the skies seeing the sun was nearly halfway across the sky, signaling noon.

"Noon?" Hiccup half yelled before covering his mouth, his face tinted with light blue blush from embarrassment. He breathed a sigh of relief when he realized none of the vikings on deck were paying the slightest attention to the young dragon. Hiccup smiled at himself, scratching his head. He turned his gaze to the skies, scanning the area for any sign of Toothless, but seeing nothing of the Night Fury.

"Huh, I thought Toothless would be out flying by now," Hiccup said to himself, cocking his head slightly to the side. The young Night Fury suddenly felt a tongue drag across his head quickly before paws wrapped around him, bringing Hiccup back into the strong embrace of the larger dragon.

"Not without you," Toothless said sweetly, nuzzling himself into Hiccup. The young Night Fury purred happily and pushed gently against his love, feeling his warmth flow over him.

"Thanks, bud," Hiccup said quietly. The two were sharing a nice moment together when a loud cough was heard from in front of them, the two quickly looking forward, seeing the once inattentive vikings staring at them with amused eyes.

"Oh now you pay attention!" Hiccup said loudly, prompting the vikings to share a good laugh, one coming from behind the pair of dragons. Heavy footsteps drew closer with deep laughter slowly dying away. Stoick stood behind the pair, wiping a tear away, his smile starting to fade. After a few moments, the laughing became uncomfortably forced as the chief stood in front of the crew.

"We're nearing the Dreki cluster. The conference will be held on the inner-most and largest island as it always has been," Stoick's voice boomed out over the vessel, "This meeting will determine the fate of Berk, the viking world, and of the generations to come. We cannot afford to mess this up, there's too much riding on this. I want every single one of you on your best behavior, no screw ups, no second

chances from here on out. Do I make myself clear?" The vikings who were below deck popped their heads up, nodded along with the rest of the crew. Hiccup and Toothless nodded quickly as well, determined to have this conference be the turning point in the viking world. Hiccup looked up, catching the attention of his dragon. Those emerald eyes staring deeply into the green eyes of the smaller dragon.

"I know we can do this," Hiccup said quietly, "Together, I know we can." Toothless smiled down at his partner, marveling at his dragon's beauty, wondering how he got so lucky. The Night Fury chuckled a bit and nodded slowly.

"That's a bit cheesy, but I'll go with it," Toothless said, hugging Hiccup tighter. Hiccup rolled his eyes again, struggling to get away from the other Night Fury, but gave up after a few seconds. The young Night Fury sighed deeply and rested himself against Toothless, letting his worries melt away for a little while. Toothless seemed to have that effect on him lately, like all the worries, doubts, and expectations Hiccup had were quickly swept away by this dragon. Hiccup smiled gently and looked up towards his Night Fury.

"As much as I would love to sit here with you and let all these problems melt away, we should probably go talk with dad. He's probably back at the front, 'leading' the way for us," Hiccup said quietly, the gentle smile never fading from his face. Toothless reluctantly nodded his head, hoping the moment could've lasted longer, but he was still greatful he could enjoy the moment while he could.

"As you wish master," Toothless said teasingly as he loosened his grip on the younger Night Fury. Hiccup playfull stuck his tongue out at the bigger dragon, quickly hoping out of his grasp. The young Night Fury laughed a bit and walked up the stairs to the upper-deck, Toothless following close behind. Hiccup could hear the voices of a few vikings talking amongst themselves at the top of the stairs, and reaching the top, he saw a few familiar faces. Stoick and Spitelout were discussing what seemed to be a strategies for any scenario that could come up that they hadn't already thought of. Then there was Astrid and Snotlout who seemed to be getting along for once in their lives. Hiccup felt a light nudge to his side. Turning to see, Hiccup saw emerald eyes motioning towards the other vikings. The young Night Fury nodded lightly and the pair came close to the teens.

"Hiccup! It's about time you woke up. You should be lucky that Toothless let you sleep in some," Astrid said, a joyful look on her face.

"Hey Hiccup, Toothless," Snotlout said, having an indistinguishable expression that could be used for a variety of emotions. The teens both waved slightly as the two came closer. Even though he'd just joined in on their conversation, he could tell the atmosphere around them was somewhat depressing as if they'd been discussing all the worst scenarios that could've played out. Hiccup glanced over at Toothless who seemed to have noticed the air as well.

"So what have you guys been talking about?" Hiccup asked, hoping he'd be able to lighten the mood in some way. The teens looked at each other awkwardly, with both of them nodded in a way that said, 'Oh, why not.'

"We were...talking about possibility that something could go wrong," Snotlout said, scratching his head uncomfortably, "and how things might go if they killed or hurt you two in a way." Hiccup cocked his head to the side, never really giving that situation much thought. Sure if they killed him and Toothless it would surely spark an inter-tribal war that would trump that of the Berserker invasion in magnitude, destruction, and death. His father could lose some sense of reasoning if Hiccup weren't there. Berk would suddenly be without a dragon expert, and his friends would suffer more than anyone else considering that they would likely try to pick up the slack from where Hiccup and Toothless left off. The last of the Night Furies would've died and the island would be left to defend itself with limited knowledge.

Snotlout and Astrid looked at Hiccup whose gaze had shifted towards his feet, lost in thought. The teen vikings looked at each other and then at Toothless who was shaking his head no. Both the vikings immediately realized what they did. Both of them knew Hiccup very well, but they sometimes forget that under all those smart and clever layers is a scared teen who will overthink situations at times.

"But that's not going to happen," Astrid suddenly said confidently, "Not while we've got some fight left in us." Hiccup quickly pulled himself from his thoughts, hearing his friends encouraging words, nodding in agreement. The two vikings and the Night Fury let out an internal sigh, relieved that hadn't pushed more pressure than needed onto Hiccup.

"Are you kids ready?" Stoick asked in a caring tone that was truly rare for him. The four of them looked towards the chief, nodded their head in agreement. They all looked ahead of them to the approaching scatter of islands, ready for the challenge that lie ahead of them.

Hiccup waited anxiously with Toothless by his side. The ship had docked a good ten minutes ago and the rest of the crew was off ship excluding Astrid and Snotlout. Stoick had told the four that he needed to make arrangements before the two dragons were to reveal themselves. The four sat in silence, hearing the whispers of many vikings on the dock, waiting for their demands to be met.

"I heard they have a Night Fury," one voice whispered.

"No, he said two Night Furies," another said back.

"They're bluffin'," said a third.

"I don't know mate, maybe they're tellin' the truth," said a fourth.

"How do we know the dragon's won't kill us," a fifth said.

"Guess you'll have to trust us," a familiar voice belonging to Johan.

The young Night Fury didn't need to see to tell there was many vikings waiting on the dock. The rush of whispers and hushed voices flew throughout the area creating a chorus of impatient vikings. Suddenly the voices went quiet, leaving the wind to howl through the air creating an uneasy tension between the four, each casting uneasy

glances at each other. Heavy footsteps made their way up the plank connecting the dock and the vessel, each step sending a chill down Hiccup's spine.

"It's time," Stoick said as he climbed the final few steps, ushering the four closer. The four exchanged uneasy glances as they approached the plank, Astrid and Snotlout taking the lead. Toothless stepped behind Hiccup, giving him a reassuring smile. Hiccup smiled back uneasily, and took a deep breath. Snotlout and Astrid were looking right at the pair, nodding their heads as they both disappeared out of sight. Hiccup's heart pounding as he stepped onto the plank, jumping down. Vikings all around him took a few steps back in surprise, gasps sweeping throughout the crowd. Hiccup trembled slightly and moved over a bit, another gasp sweeping through the crowd as Toothless landed next to Hiccup. The pair looked at each other and Toothless gave a reassuring nod. Hiccup took another deep breath and nodded back. Astrid and Snotlout were in front of them both, each having a confident front, but up close, Hiccup could see the worry that shone through their eyes.

"Let's go, they're waiting for us inside," Stoick's voice said loudly.

Toothless looked around him, checking for anyone who may want to hurt him or his Night Fury. The dragon was quite surprised by the sight. Many of the vikings didn't even cast hateful or threatening stares, but rather had the look of amazement, surprise, or confusion.

"It's really a Night Fury! Two Night Furies!" a voice said in excitement.

"I really didn't think they could tame the beasts," another one said with astonishment.

"Wait and see, those devil's will turn on us in a second," a harsh older voice said.

Toothless unintentionally drew closer to Hiccup, feeling their bodies brushing slightly. Toothless suddenly felt the body next to him jump slightly from the sudden contact. Turning, the Night Fury caught sight of an embarrassed Hiccup who tried to play off it the best. Toothless couldn't help but laugh a little at the younger Night Fury's. Hiccup looked away from him dramatically and acted all offended, causing the dragon to laugh harder.

Astrid looked back and noticed the two, the worry slowly draining away from her. If those two can be happy and carefree in this situation, then maybe she could too. A few laughs caught her ear as she looked around. Quite a few vikings were laughing at the display being put on for them. It certainly surprised Astrid, thinking that they'd all be staring in fear, hate, or threatening to kill the two, but, they seemed so relax around the two. Maybe that's just the effect the two have on people, causing their worries to melt away, letting boundaries slowly slip away.

Hiccup realized the laughing and looked down, a tint of blue growing across his face. He could feel Toothless nudging against him softly. Hiccup looked over, seeing those beautiful emerald eyes staring at him happily.

"Don't be nervous. Look around, the vikings that were set on killing any dragon that was near them are suddenly laughing and looking at ease around us," Toothless said quietly. Sure enough, many vikings had looks of relaxation, astonishment, and some even looked rather happy.

"Don't be fooled! Those devils are trying to trick us! They want us to like them so we'll be easy prey!" One viking shouted out. Hiccup's nervousness came back, seeing the once relaxed vikings become tense, looks of amazement being traded for looks of malice. Of course they would, I mean they were vikings after all, vikings who killed dragons.

\_ "Dragons like me and Toothless," \_Hiccup thought to himself. The young Night Fury quickly brought his gaze back down to his feet, and just kept watch as the ground passed by.

Toothless' happiness quickly faded and was replaced with a protective urge.

\_ "If they so much as touch you," \_Toothless thought to himself, looking down at his Night Fury. Toothless thought back to when the pair were dragged out of Stoick's home and to the Dragon Academy, or anything Dagur had done. If these vikings were anything like the Berserkers, Toothless didn't know if he could protect Hiccup, but still, he made a promise and he intended to keep it.

Astrid's worry quickly returned when hostility flooded the air so heavily it felt as if it was impossible to breath. Vikings under pressure were so quick to jump to conclusion. She was certainly glad she wasn't one of them, well, at least she didn't think she was one of them.

"Keep composed, keep calm, keep your head," Astrid thought to herself as she returned her gaze back in front of her, seeing the large doors of the conference hall slowly opening in front of the Berk vikings, the loud creaking of wood echoing throughout the island.

Hiccup's hearted pounded heavily in his chest and felt as if it would burst out at any moment. The young Night Fury could hear voices raised in argument quickly dying as the four slowly walked in. Hiccup suddenly felt very hot, feeling the stares of many tribal leaders staring at him intently. The eyes of the onlookers seemed to scorch into him, filling him with fear and dread. The room was set up in a large round formation, with several large chairs distant from each other, each occupied with a chief from another village.

"So these are the legendary Night Furies," said a strong voice to Hiccup's left. The large man had a scar running front his left cheek up that curved around his eye and stopped just before his brow. His hair was long and uncared for, his short beard cut cleanly, his body was wracked with scars from many battles. His smirk sent chills down Hiccup's spine, his expression truly terrifying.

"I did as you asked and I brought you dragons. As you can see, they're our allies, not our enemies. We've been training together and living in peace for quite a few months," Stoick said confidently, making his way towards the center of the room. Doubtful glances were cast his way.

"To make my point clear, come and see for yourself," Stoick said, motioning to the chief that Hiccup was terrified of. Suddenly that chief's expression changed quickly to that of shock.

"You want me to what?" The chief asked loudly. Stoick looked at him curiously.

"Surely Calder the Cold isn't afraid?" Stoick asked. The Berk chief motioned for Toothless to come closer, and the Night Fury quickly obliged his love's father. Calder looked on in anger, but quickly tilted his head to the side.

"Is this some kind of ploy to get me closer to that damned dragon? You intend on killing me, don't you?" Calder bursted out, a harsh smile spreading across his face. Stoick looked on with cold eyes, shaking head, turning away.

"Is anyone willing to give these dragons a chance?" Stoick asked, looking around. Many of the chiefs looked away quickly, not daring to go near the unknown dragons. The Berk chief looked to Hiccup, motioning him closer. Hiccup took a few uneasy steps and made his way closer to his father.

"I'm going to be honest with you," Stoick said quietly, "I don't know what I can say to them. They're too...close-minded. I trust you, and I believe in this gift. Do what you were destined for, son." Hiccup's heart skipped a beat and he nodded nervously.

"What are you saying to that dragon Stoick?" Another chief asked convictingly. Stoick stood up slowly and looked around the room.

"You'll see," Stoick said, walking back towards Astrid, Snotlout, and the rest of the Berk vikings watching anxiously. Toothless reluctantly walked back with the chief, cast a worried glances towards his Night Fury, scared that a viking is going to jump up at any moment and attack his Hiccup.

Hiccup looked around the room, taking a deep breath. The chiefs were looking confused, wondering why Stoick had left the dragon out alone. The young Night Fury's mind raced as he tried to focus on what to say first.

\_They're going to freak out no matter what I say,\_ Hiccup thought to himself, \_Might as well just introduce myself.\_ Hiccup composed himself, sitting back on his tail and making himself appear taller. With as much confidence as he could muster, he said his first words before the chiefs.

"Hello, my name is Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third," Hiccup said, his voice remaining calm and composed, "I was the one who trained the dragons, and I, was the one who became a dragon myself."

## 20. Chapter 20

"Hello, my name is Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third," Hiccup said, his voice remaining calm and composed, "I was the one who trained the dragons, and I, was the one who became a dragon myself."

The room went instantly quiet. Only the sound of the wind howling outside the giant wooden doors made a subtle sound that faintly reverberated around the room. Hiccup looked around the room slowly, seeing hanging mouths and wide eyes of disbelief.

"Dude, how high am I? I could've sworn that dragon just talked, hahaha," one viking said from Hiccup's right. No one responded to the viking, everyone just kept staring at Hiccup as if no one had heard him. Hiccup looked behind him, seeing the Berk vikings nodded their heads approvingly, ushering him on.

"As I said, I became a dragon myself a few weeks ago," Hiccup said cautiously, "At first, I believed I had been cursed by the Gods for befriending a dragon, but now I see, that it was a gift. This gift was bestowed upon me for the specific reason to help bridge the gap between humans and dragons, to be the connection that binds the two species together. To bring together two different worlds and cultures is the destiny that the Gods above have given me." Hiccup finished his last few words confidently. The room was still very quiet, so much so that Hiccup could hear his own heart beating in his chest nervously.

"That dragon really is talking!" one viking in front of Hiccup shouted. Instantly the entire room was flooded with yelling, questions, demands, confused gibberish. Hiccup took a few steps back, not knowing where to look, what to say, or what to do. The yelling only intensified when no answers were met immediately, leading to several chiefs bickering with each other. Hiccup looked back but only saw his father and most the other Berk vikings join in on the shouting match. The young Night Fury quickly looked to Toothless who shrugged his shoulders, overwhelmed by the noise. Snotlout was looking around the room in disappointment, seeing a flash of his future. Astrid seemed to have remained calm and tried shouting something to him.

"What?" Hiccup asked shouted, being met with a quizzical look from Astrid who tried again to shout something back to him. There was something about the situation they were in, the shouting chiefs, the screams echoing in his head, the slamming of fists, all of it just cumulated in Hiccup's head quickly, sending him over the edge for the first time in a while.

"Stop!" Hiccup yelled, being met with no response, "Stop yelling!" Still no one paid attention to the shouting dragon, increasing his anger even more. He used to always be treated like he wasn't there and he'd be damned if he let that happen again.

"Enough!" Yelled a voice from the left of Hiccup. He recognized the rough voice as Calder. The room fell silent rather quickly as attention turned towards the chief. Calder slowly rose from his chair and walked over towards Hiccup. The young Night Fury raised a paw when he noticed Toothless and Stoick making their way over to him. The two looked at him in confusion and worry but obliged his wishes. Calder quickly came to a stop in front of the Night Fury. Even sitting on his tail and making himself appear larger, he was still short in comparison to the large man who must've been twice the size of Stoick. Hiccup wondered to himself how that was even possible but figured it was just his imagination and nerves playing with his mind.

"A talking dragon," Calder said, observing the young Night Fury before him, "and a Night Fury at that. Tell me, what did you say your name was." The viking looked on, intrigued by the situation. The hesitation that was present before seemed to have disappeared rather quickly.

"Hiccup, sir. Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third," Hiccup replied, keeping the same confidence in his voice as before. The chief looked at him surprised and quickly brought his gaze to Stoick.

"Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third as in your son Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third?" Calder asked, his rough voice smoothing out as his voice raised to a higher pitch, one that had a sense of curiosity and surprise. Stoick nodded slowly, and stroked his beard slowly.

"Yes, as in my son, Calder," Stoick replied cautiously. Calder quickly looked back to the Night Fury sitting in front of him.

"You've got to be kidding me," Calder said in disbelief, "There's no way. No one has seen a Night Fury before now, how do we know that's not a skill you devils have?" Hiccup cocked his head to the side, unsure how to answer that question. After a few moments of silence, Hiccup just decided to tell him the only response he could.

"You're just gonna have to trust me on this," Hiccup said. Calder looked at the young Night Fury, squinting his eyes at the boy, tilting his head to the sides to get a good look. The chief took a step back and crossed his arms, looking to the rest of the Berk vikings.

"Is he who he says he is?" Calder asked quickly. Stoick walked forward with Toothless following him closely. The Berk chief put a hand on his son's shoulder, and nodded his head.

"I watched the change happen right in front of my very own eyes. Several minutes of blood, screaming, and confusion transformed my son into a Night Fury," Stoick said, "This dragon is my son." Calder eyed the boy curiously before looking around the room at the other vikings. They all were too confused and bewildered to think properly and just walked on. Calder brought his gaze back to the trio in front of him, looking to Toothless.

"Can you talk too?" Calder asked. Toothless shook his head in response.

"He's an actual dragon, pure Night Fury," Hiccup said, "The one I shot out of the sky and trained." Calder looked at the boy and back to Stoick.

"It was \_your \_son who trained the dragon, Stoick?" Calder asked in surprise. Stoick nodded his head, looking around the room with a tinge of pride glowing off of him.

"Yes, Hiccup was the one who trained the dragons," Stoick said proudly. Calder took a moment to process the situation and information that came into play. He raised his hand, pointing to Hiccup lightly.

"So, you shot a Night Fury out of the sky...with that contraption Stoick said you built...then you...trained it?" Calder asked quietly, getting a brisk nod from Hiccup, "Then you defeat the Red Death with this Night Fury...like Stoick explained a few days ago. After that, for some reason only known to the Gods, you transform...into a dragon...and why? Are you cursed? Is this your punishment for befriending a dragon, or maybe this is the secret power of the Night Furies? Why no one has ever lived to tell the tale because they became one themselves? " Hiccup expected questions like these to be asked, but he still had trouble finding his words, but eventually, he responded in the best way he could.

"No, this isn't a curse. This, despite what it looks like, is the change I needed in order to bring two warring species together. This is a gift from the Gods to help me do this. I am not the result of a harsh punishment the gods placed because I befriended a dragon," Hiccup said, starting off nervously but trails into confidence by the end of his sentence. Calder looked questioningly, debating whether or not to believe this kid, to believe any of what's going on. It was just too surreal and insane for him to comprehend.

"What makes you so sure?" Calder asked convictingly. Hiccup took a hesitant step back, the conviction in his voice catching the young Night Fury off-guard. He didn't quite know how to respond until he accidentally bumped into Toothless. Looking back at his companion, he suddenly realized the reason he'd been going on through this ever growing difficult life.

"Because Toothless said so...and I trust him...more than anyone else," Hiccup said, a small smile forming on his face that quickly disappeared when he looked into Calder's eyes. The chief eyed the dragon curiously before letting out a loud laugh, his strong voice echoing throughout the room. Calder reached his hand down and rubbed Hiccup's head quickly before returning to his seat.

"I like you, and I believe you're telling the truth," Calder threw over his shoulder. The viking sat comfortably in his chair, looking around the room expectantly.

"And what have you chiefs made of the kid?" Calder asked quickly and loudly. Three other chiefs stood up, obviously from the other bigger tribes Stoick had talked about before. One of the chiefs looked a little scrawny compared to the rest, a quite a bit younger.

"The Ase have no quarrel with Berk and will have no involvement with further incursions that may arise," The viking started off, his voice strangely deep counteracting his stature and physique, "We will maintain the neutrality we have with the Berk tribe." With that, the young chief sat down, content with his answer. To his left, another chief threw in her opinion. This woman was average height with strong muscles bursting from her shining armour. She had a long scar trailing up from the elbow to her shoulder on her right arm, the scar running a jagged line. She had a smooth and crystalline voice that seemed to quell even the harshest of emotions matched perfectly with her next to flawless features and bright golden hair that was cut short.

"I have talked to my men, and we agree, that as the island of Stein, we'd like to learn from the vikings of Berk and negotiate a treaty for an alliance," The woman said smoothly and confidently, "We've

been losing the war with the dragons for some time now, losing too many men and women to this unending battle. I see that a dragon with the gift to speak must be a sign from the Gods that this war must end." The viking sat down at her own pace, making herself comfortable. There was something about her that Hiccup liked about her, an aura of trust and believability just flowed from her. The final chief was rugged, old, and beaten by the years of hard battle. His gray hair grew unevenly from his scarred head, his beard cut short and on point. His right eye was covered by an eye patch, with a scar running under the leather. He was smaller and scrawnier than the rest as if he hadn't properly ate in several weeks. Hiccup looked closer and saw his cloak that flowed lowly behind him was made from what appeared to be Monstrous Nightmare skin, sending a quick burst of fear down into Hiccup's stomach. The old viking raised a finger at the young dragon, eyeing him suspiciously.

"The island of Langley will never align itself with these beasts," The old man said viciously, "We will have nothing to do with you blasphemous traitors. Do not come anywhere near our waters or we shall instigate attack. From this day forward, you will consider us enemies." Once the old man finished, he was met with several outcries from his Langely vikings, protesting against his actions. Hiccup noticed that all the vikings that were with him were in their early twenties at least, pretty young group to be attending an important conference such as this.

"Be it as you wish Jarl," Stoick said angrily, "Just know that we don't take kindly to those who do us harm. I suggest you follow the advice of your vikings and try to learn from us." The old viking laughed harshly at the Berk chief, looking at him maliciously.

"You may all be under the spell of those wicked fiends, but I'll never let my soul be tainted by their demonic ways!" The old chief yelled before he hobbled his way out of the room, throwing insults left and right as he pushed his way out the door, his Langely vikings following unhappily behind him. With a slow creak and quiet shut, the door to the conference room quietly shut.

"And the few remaining tribes, what are your decisions?" Stoick asked, turning his attention to the smaller few tribes that had attended the conference. Four more chiefs stepped up, giving their decisions.

"We remain neutral," said a middle-aged man.

"Our decision is neutral," said a middle-aged woman.

"We'd like to align ourselves with the Berk vikings," said an old, wise chief.

"We revoke our current alignment with Berk and wish to become a neutral party," the final chief said, an unsure older chief.

Stoick nodded his head approvingly to the demands of the remaining tribes. The Berk chief turned his attention toward Calder who made himself comfortable in his chair, eating a leg of turkey to pass the time.

"You never gave us your answer Calder," Stoick asked expectantly. The Gunnar chief laughed slightly and cleared his throat.

"Our answer is a proposed alliance between our two tribes," Calder said with hope, looking towards Hiccup, "I feel you are the beacon of hope we all desperately needed to end this endless war." Hiccup felt flattered hearing these words, but a bit overwhelmed and pressured with this sudden responsibility to teach not just his tribe, but other tribes that are now looking at him wanting guidance to a hopefully brighter future. The young Night Fury's worries quickly vanished when he felt a reassuring paw in his shoulder. Looking over he saw the happy eyes of Toothless. With the place having cleared out substantially, Hiccup thought it would be alright to relax. Stoick patted his son's shoulder happily and proudly before making his way over to the Berk vikings.

"I knew you'd do great Hiccup," Toothless said, licking the boy affectionately. Hiccup leaned into his dragon and let out a loud breath.

"I felt like my heart was going to explode for a few seconds there," Hiccup replied lightheartedly, sending a gentle smile across his love's face. Toothless nodded his head, nuzzling slightly into Hiccup.

"I know, me too, but I told you things would be okay," Toothless said in a matter-of-factly voice, annoying Hiccup slightly.

"I don't know how, but you do have a knack of calling things," Hiccup said flatly, "Is the secret of the Night Furies seeing the future?" Toothless looked at his love, cocking his head to the side before letting out a light-hearted laugh.

"Maybe," Toothless said, sticking his tongue out playfully at Hiccup. The smaller dragon moved away from the larger and rolled his eyes, making his way towards the rest of the Berk vikings.

"If you do, that would be such a buzzkill. No surprises or anything," Hiccup said, swishing his tail in Toothless' face, getting a quick but gentle bite from the Night Fury. Hiccup looked back quickly and looked at him playfully.

"C'mon, we've got a lot to do bud," Hiccup said, motioning to the waiting Astrid and Snotlout who tried to act like they weren't watching on in amusement from the two. Sure it was awkward in the beginning, but even people like Snotlout had to admit they were a pretty cute couple. Even in tough times they can still have a good time with one another, a type of relationship Snotlout could only dream of.

Hiccup and Toothless walked out side by side next to Astrid and Snotlout, small talk being exchanged between the four as they descended the stairs that led up to the conference hall. Astrid suddenly stopped short and brought everyone's attention up. Many vikings froze where they were and looked on. Stoick was a few feet in front of the teens, his words harsh and disgusted.

"What do the Berserker's want? Dagur knows he's been banned from conferences until the foreseeable future," The chief said, his words filled with anger and pain from harsh memories that Dagur inflicted. Hiccup had heard the young chief survived his wounds, losing an arm in the final skirmish that was the failed Berserker invasion of

Berk.

"You really think he'll listen to that?" Astrid yelled as she ran down towards the docks, grabbing an axe lying next to a crate, "I'll kill him! I'll kill him for what he's done! I'll cut off his head, stick on a stake and burn it!" Hiccup, and the others looked in surprise. The once calm Astrid had suddenly snapped at the thought of seeing Dagur. Even though Hiccup couldn't blame her in the slightest for wanting to kill that insane viking, seeing her snap like that was not what he expected. Stoick quickly rushed in behind and stole away the axe, throwing it to the side. The chief shook her lightly, and looked into her eyes.

"Astrid, keep your head," Stoick said calmly, "I know what you're feeling but now isn't the time." Astrid stared at the chief with an unresolved look, but reluctantly nodded her head.

"Good," Stoick said, stepping away from the young viking, "Berk vikings! It may be one ship, but prepare yourself for the worst!" Stoick shouted out orders to his men, followed by other chief's issuing the same. Knowing the Berserkers, they could've somehow managed to pack an entire armada into one ship to lower the enemy's defenses. Toothless and Hiccup hung at the back of the group along with Astrid, Snotlout, and any other young vikings that had come along. The ship slowly docked, a few hands on deck of the ship raising their hands in the air, slowly making their way from the ship.

"What's their angle on this?" Hiccup whispered to the group and was met with unsure answers and shrugs. One last viking leapt down from the ship confidently and walked tall towards the armed vikings. Hiccup stared in surprise, not entirely sure what to do or what to say, all he could do was observe and hope for the best.

"Well hello! My name's Iona! I'm the new chief of the Berserkers! Oh and trust me, I'm nothing like my brother was!" The girl in her early twenties said happily and confidently as she held her hand out to Stoick, "Nice to meet ya!"

## 21. Chapter 21

I apologize for the shorter chapter, the storyline kinda fell on an awkward place leaving me with it's 'ending' making for a shorter chapter. I didn't want to start the next part just yet because there is another chapter...Chapter 21.5 that i'll be uploading sometime today or tomorrow which will contain some much anticipated things...Toothcup related things, so be on the look out for that. After that chapter is finished, the story will progress as it should. Thank to all who've been sticking with me this far! You really keep me motivated and seeing a new review makes my heart leap! I promise to keep releasing new and good content for quite a while!

\* \* \*

><p>"Iona?" Stoick said surprised, "You've certainly grown up since the last time I saw you." Hiccup noticed his father was acting differently towards this girl, letting his guard down despite the fact she is a Berserker. The young Night Fury grit his teeth together slightly, anticipating something to go wrong, but still, he had to

give the girl the benefit of the doubt so he hung back and observed with Toothless.<p>

"I'm sorry, do I know you? Oh wait! You're Mr. Stoick! You haven't changed one bit!" the girl said happily. The longer Hiccup looked on the more he realized the stark contrast between this girl and her supposed brother Dagur. The air around her radiated with life and her very presence filled the air with such a light happy feeling that it seemed to infect everyone around.

"Yes, but why are you here? What is your purpose?" Stoick asked, judging the few Berserkers she brought along with her. Iona looked over her shoulder to the vikings standing behind her with pride. That bright smile never left her face for a moment, no matter what she did.

"These men and women are the ones who stuck by me. Dagur killed my father and he locked me away. At first I didn't understand why he threw me in a cell to rot rather than kill me, after all, I'm competition and was to be next in line as chief. It was made clear rather quickly that the fool at some sick incestuous fantasy that involved me, the perv," Iona said slowly, the smile slowly fading from her face before returning quickly, "But once I heard the fool suffered a horrible defeat at Berk, I used his moment of weakness and low popularity to turn the tables on him, with the title of chief returning to it's rightful heir. That is the reason I am here today Mr. Stoick. I've come to the conference as to show that the Berserkers will be returning to the old ways when my father was still chief. I want to make my late father proud and follow in his footsteps." Stoick looked on with many other vikings, intrigued by her story.

"And where is Dagur now?" A voice asked somewhere from Hiccup's left. Iona tilted her head and raised her brow quickly.

"That one armed fool is in the most fortified Berserker prison we have. He's insane, dangerous, and a high-risk agent. In fact, when I return, I will be overseeing his execution for charges of high treason, unregulated conquest, and the murder of countless innocent vikings," Iona said, a tinge of happiness flooding into her voice that sent a small chill down Hiccup's spine. The quick sadistic pleasure in her voice caught the young Night Fury off guard, wondering if every Berserker has sadistic tendencies. Hiccup looked over to Toothless, seeing the Night Fury looking cautiously at the girl, sizing her up. The young Night Fury moved over closer to Toothless, feeling safer with his dragon's warmth around him. Toothless quickly brought his tail around Hiccup, looking down quickly.

"I live to see peace and harmony in the viking wor—" Iona started off, cutting herself short when she made eye contact with Hiccup and Toothless at the back of the crowd. The new Berserker chief eyed the dragon's curiously before widening her eyes in remembrance.

"That's right! You two must be the Night Furies Dagur kept screaming about!" Iona said light-heartedly as she pushed her way effortlessly through the crowd. The girl looked pretty average in terms of muscle, but she shoved the tough vikings out of the way with so little effort that it scared Hiccup a bit. Getting within a few feet of the dragons, Toothless quickly stepped in front of Hiccup defensively,

the Night Fury's eyes turning to slit showing aggression towards anyone who may hurt his dragon. Iona took a short step back in surprise, certainly not expecting that reaction out of the two.

"I apologize, Mr. Night Fury, I didn't mean to offend you in any way," She said cautiously as she took another step back. Hiccup slowly moved his head to get a better look at the girl backing away. There seemed to be a genuine hurt in her eyes, as if she hated offending or hurting people in anyway, somehow, just like her father who Hiccup had met once or twice before a long while ago, but the similarities in their behavior and personalities were pretty great.

"His name's Toothless," Hiccup said quietly, being received with a dumbstruck looked on the viking girls face. The girl kept switching her gaze between the two as she took a cautiously step backwards.

"So Dagur wasn't completely deranged when he said one of them could talk," Iona said with intrigue, "Are you, by any chance, Hiccup?" Hiccup looked at the young woman, not being able to decipher the look in her eyes. Either way, there was something about this girl that was off, yet there was a sense of trust, acceptance, and overall kindness around her that it kept making Hiccup second guess the girl.

"Yes, I'm Hiccup," the young Night Fury said cautiously, "And this is my dragon, Toothless, but you...already know that." Hiccup's words trailed off towards the end as he looked around uncomfortably. Many vikings had seemed to returned to their normal routine and duties, leaving very few people to keep watch over the Berserkers, in those few, the Berk vikings.

\_ "Why does no one care there are Berserkers right in front of them?" Hiccup thought to himself. At the seemingly most opportune moment, Stoick strolled up to the uncomfortable trio.

"There's no need to be afraid of Iona here," Stoick said confidently, "Since she was a little girl, she has always tried to follow in her dad's footsteps. Her and Dagur were like two sides to a coin. Dagur being the bad side, and Iona being the good." Hearing Stoick's words didn't ease Toothless' troubled mind in the slightest.

"Your dad trusts her, but, shes going to have to earn mine. I don't want her anywhere near you, near Berk, not until I think she's okay," Toothless said to Hiccup, giving the smaller dragon a sense of warmth hearing the bigger dragon's protective words. Iona smiled lightly at Stoick, nodding her head a bit.

"If it's your trust I have to gain, then I promise to show you I'm nothing like my broth-" Iona said, cutting herself off quickly looking at the scar along Toothless' neck. Her mouth slowly dropped open as her eyes traced the scar. Hiccup could see that she was deep in thought, lost somewhere far away.

"I didn't think it could be possible," Iona whispered. Hiccup strained his ears but hardly caught any of what she said.

"What was that?" Hiccup asked, getting no reaction out of the Berserker chief. Stoick looked at the girl in curiously, placing a hand on her shoulder and shaking her slightly.

"I'm sorry what? Oh nothing, nothing. What was I saying?" She asked innocently, her eyes bright and clear casting away the shadows of the past that once flooded her thoughts. Hiccup moved himself around Toothless, or at least he tried, but the dragon was persistent on keeping his love behind him.

"Not until I'm sure she's okay," Toothless said quietly to Hiccup, getting a small nod from the younger. Iona tilted her head to the side and rubbed her chin slightly, observing the two.

"Are you...able to talk with him?" Iona asked. Hiccup fidgeted for a moment and then nodded his head. Iona nodded her head slowly and continued on.

"Just him, or...?" The young woman said. Hiccup shook his head quickly.

"All," He almost whispered. There was something about this woman that just threw Hiccup off, the way she approached both the Night Furies with seemingly no fear as if that's where she belonged, her kindness and behavior just didn't seem to match up with a typical viking. She was different, but somehow she wasn't.

"Oh! I know! It's like that old tale about Raul and Dreki!" Iona said gleefully, her eyes lighting up, "My father used to tell me that story before I went to bed! I always found it so mystical and awesome!" This girl acted half her age it seemed, but there was still an air of maturity and formality surrounding her.

\_ "I think...she'll make a great chief," \_Hiccup thought to himself, watching the girl twirl herself around quickly. Looking to the sky her smile quickly faded and she turned to run back to the boats, waving over her shoulder.

"Sorry! I've gotta run! I hope to see you again soon Mr. Stoick, Mr. Toothless, Mr. Hiccup!" Iona shouted over her shoulder, and with that, she was gone. Stoick stood watching her run down the docks and hop aboard the ship, ushering her vikings along with her.

"She is a bit unusual," Stoick said quietly, before looking to his son, "Not like you unusual, but in her own special way." The chief let a small smile form upon his face seeing his son roll his eyes at the comment. Even though the woman was gone, Toothless still remained protective of Hiccup, looking around quickly for any signs of attack or danger.

"Bud, it's okay, no one is going to hurt us," Hiccup said comfortingly. Toothless looked back at his dragon and his eyes returned to their relaxed look with the Night Fury nodding his head.

"I just want to be sure," The Night Fury said quietly, receiving a small smile from Hiccup.

"I know, I know," Hiccup said lovingly, nuzzling into Toothless. A sharp cough separated the two quickly, seeing Stoick looking at them suspiciously.

"We leave in twenty minutes," Stoick said, walking off towards the

Berk vessel, "Oh, and try not to do something embarrassing please."

Hiccup stretched his body, waking up from his sleep. It was dark below deck since the moon didn't provide much light. After a few moments though, his dragon eyes adjusted to the darkness, helping him see through the dim light of the full moon. The young Night Fury yawned quietly, careful not to disturb any of the other sleeping vikings, including Toothless who had curled himself around Hiccup protectively. Hiccup felt at ease with his Night Fury around, and as much as he would want to, he just simply could not sleep through the snoring of the other vikings. Slowly sliding himself out from Toothless comforting grip, he made his way through the sleeping vikings then went above deck. Two other vikings were keeping watch and maintaining the ship while the crew slept, that being Stoick at the wheel, and Johan keeping maintenance whenever it was needed.

"What are you doing up?" Stoick asked quietly. Hiccup turned to his father and shook his head some.

"Couldn't sleep," Hiccup said, getting a small nod from his father. Hiccup made his way to the side of the ship, looking out into the ocean. The subtle waves pushed against the boat and a cool breeze slowly blew past Hiccup as he stared into the endless expanse of water. Looking up, he could see the millions of sparkling orbs in the sky covered in colors and twirling lights that illuminated the night sky.

"Never gets old," Hiccup whispered to himself. The sky reminded him of the first night he spent as a Night Fury, the way the sky looked so beautiful and breathtaking with new eyes that could see things no human would ever be able too. Back then, things were hectic, but still simple. Now its just as hectic only with so many more moving parts added to the machine. Hiccup sighed to himself softly started thinking of simpler times, back in the few months between the Red Death and his transformation. Back when things were simple.

"Keep sighing and you're gonna pass out," a calm voice said quietly behind Hiccup, causing him to jump. Hiccup let out an annoyed sigh and stared at his Night Fury.

"I'm not going to pass out," Hiccup said, swinging his tail to hit Toothless lightly as he turned back towards the ocean. Toothless laughed lightly and sat next to his dragon who was fixated on the sky above.

"Life just doesn't get any simpler, does it?" Hiccup asked quietly. Toothless looked over at the young Night Fury, noticing the tired expression that swept over Hiccup's face. The Night Fury raised a curious brow and moved a little closer to Hiccup.

"No, it never does," Toothless said soothingly, "but it's the experience, the people you meet, the friendships you forge, the love you find, and the lives you change. It makes the hardships worth it in the end." Hiccup looked over at Toothless with a small smile on his face.

"When did you get so wise?" Hiccup asked, nudging into Toothless. The Night Fury laughed quietly and nudged the smaller dragon

back.

"Always, but you've always been wiser beyond your years, so I never needed to give much advice to you up until recently," Toothless said, licking Hiccup on head lightly. Hiccup blushed lightly from the attention, purring gently. The two sat in each other's company for a few minutes with the gentle sway of the vessel creating a smooth rhythm

"Life's just gonna get crazier, bud. From what dad was telling me earlier, it seems as if we'll have a few more vikings on Berk. Each tribe is sending a few vikings our way to learn about dragon taming and riding which leaves us with a lot of responsibilities," Hiccup said quietly, "I thought it was a handful just dealing with Berk vikings, but with a new set of vikings, one with different behaviors and personalities, brand new people I've never met. This is going to be a long few weeks." Hiccup leaned into Toothless and rested his head, looking off to the side seeing Berk nearing in the distance.

"At least we're almost home," Toothless said comfortingly, "and then we can get some real sleep, at home, no loud snoring, just you and me." Toothless came up behind Hiccup and wrapped himself around the smaller dragon, bringing him in close for a tight hug. The Night Fury let out a soft purr cuddling into his favorite dragon. Hiccup laughed a bit and relaxed into his arms.

"We've got a few days until the other tribes arrive," Hiccup said grudgingly, "Let's make the next few days last." Hiccup smiled gently, looking up at Toothless and licking his cheek lovingly. Toothless planted a quick kiss on his dragon's lips and the pair looked forward to the sun slowly creeping up over the horizon.

"I thought it was earlier than that," Toothless said in slight horror, "I'm still exhausted but the day just started!" Hiccup laughed gently and rubbed his dragon's paw comfortingly.

"I left the academy to Fishlegs for today so we can sleep in all we want," Hiccup said, earning a happy sigh from Toothless. The Night Fury started to slowly rub his dragon's stomach lovingly, enjoying the few moments they had together.

"The island's about to get so much more exciting," Toothless whispered, receiving a curt nod from his lover.

## 22. Chapter 21 Extra

\_\*\*This chapter contains sexual content -reader discretion is advised-\*\*\_

\* \* \*

><p>Dark clouds hung over Berk, warning of a storm to come. Three long days have passed since Hiccup, Toothless, and the rest of the Berk vikings returned from the conference. Vikings all around Berk were busy preparing for the new arrivals due in just another day. Stoick made it very clear that the Berk vikings must make sure the guests were treated with the best hospitality the vikings could manage. Granted, Berk wasn't the greatest place for

hospitality.<p>

Hiccup sat alone in his living room space, the fire in the pit crackling creating the only noise in the entire house. For the past three days, this is how it's been for the young Night Fury. Lonely. The scenes played over and over in Hiccup's head as he tried to figure out what he did that drove his Night Fury away.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup and Toothless were enjoying each other's company, watching as the sun slowly rose into the sky, creating a beautiful dawn. Toothless tilted his head to the side questioningly, sniffing the air for a few moments. The Night Fury's eyes became slits and he jumped away from Hiccup, the dragon's breathing heavy. Toothless eyed the surprised Hiccup sharply.<p>

"Toothless?" Hiccup said quietly, "What's wrong?" Toothless stared at the young Night Fury then looked away quickly, shaking his head wildly as if something was attacking him.

"Toothless! Toothless what's wrong?" Hiccup yelled, seeing his Night Fury fighting an invisible enemy. Hiccup tried to get closer to the wild Night Fury stopping short when Toothless suddenly stopped his thrashing and turning towards Hiccup, his eye's full of regret.

"I'm so sorry," the Night Fury said before flying off. Hiccup immediately flew after him, but didn't get far before he lost sight of the dragon, having flown somewhere in the wilderness of Berk. Hiccup couldn't forget the feelings of abandonment and fear rush through his body. Where was his dragon going? Why did he leave so suddenly? Why was he sorry?

In the days proceeding Toothless' sudden disappearance, he only caught sight of the Night Fury flying above Berk. Hiccup followed him a short ways to a small clearing outside the village. Just as before, the Night Fury was acting erratically and kept whispering to himself, words Hiccup could never quite catch.

"Toothless?" Hiccup called out cautiously, stepping out from his hiding place. The Night Fury quickly jerked his head towards Hiccup. With every small, cautious step Hiccup, Toothless took another one backwards.

"Please...just tell me what's wrong!" Hiccup cried out, tears welling up in his eyes, "Come home! I miss you! Just tell me what I did wrong!" Toothless stared at the Night Fury as if he didn't understand a word he said. The dragon winced and recoiled from Hiccup's body, before turning to fly away. Hiccup quickly rushed to Toothless.

"Wait!" Hiccup cried out, but stopped short when Toothless whipped around and growled menacingly.

"S-S-Stay a-a-away!" Toothless muttered out before flying off into the skies, leaving Hiccup alone with his shattered heart.

"Just tell me what I did wrong," Hiccup whispered to himself.

\* \* \*

><p>A knock on the door pulled Hiccup from his thoughts. The young Night Fury sighed softly and trudged to the doors, wiping a few tears from his eyes. The door creaked open revealing Astrid standing with a wide grin on her face and a bag slung over her shoulder. Seeing her friend look so defeated and depressed quickly took the smile from her face.<p>

"He still isn't back?" Astrid asked surprised. Hiccup nodded his head and opened the door wider to allow the young viking inside. She quickly walked in and over to the kitchen, placing the bag on the counter and pulling out various food items. Hiccup quietly made his way back to his spot staring at the fire. Astrid glanced over her shoulder at the depressed dragon.

"You know there's a good reason why he's gone. Remember when you lost your mom's helmet? He searched all over the ocean for it, came back, then broke his automatic tailfin to show that he truly wanted to be with you," Astrid said with hope flooding into her voice. Hiccup didn't look up from the fire, but nodded lightly to show he had heard.

\_ "Of course, he's probably already thought of a best case scenario, but this is the longest the two have ever been apart," \_ Astrid thought to herself, \_ "By now he'd be imagining all the worst possible reasons why Toothless left." \_ Glancing back over her shoulder when she heard a small sizzle coming from Hiccup's direction. She dropped the food she was preparing and walked over to her friend, wrapping one arm around him comfortingly.

"I know you're sad Hiccup, but crying about it isn't going to solve anything. After we eat, go and find him and demand answers. He at least owes you that much," Astrid said lightly, "We both know where he is right now." With that, the viking girl went back to fixing them both a nice lunch, leaving Hiccup to his thoughts.

"She' right, of course she's right," Hiccup said, trying to build up doubt towards his fears, "but...I had to have done something for him to just leave like that. Maybe all the time we spent together just built up a wall of hate in him. Maybe he really did hold it against me, back when I shot him down. I took away his flight and the only way he could fly again was with my help. Granted, he did destroy the tailfin...but..but he could've just as easily regretted it a few days later." With every positive thought that popped into Hiccup's head, another bad one weighed it down and instilled more fear, guilt, and doubt into the young Night Fury. By the time Astrid had finished, it was like she was never there to give him hope in the first place.

After the meal, Astrid cleaned up the house a bit and forced Hiccup outside for some 'much needed fresh air.' Hiccup wasn't too happy about it. The last thing he wanted was for people to see him depressed and dreary, but after a few minutes, Astrid poked her head outside.

"Go and find him Hiccup," Astrid said, noticing Hiccup hadn't moved from his spot. Hiccup looked over at the young girl and shook his head lightly.

"He's just gonna run away again...he's gonna tell me that he would be

better off alone," Hiccup said quietly, "I'm scared he's..." Astrid rolled her eyes at the young dragon and stepped outside to punch him in the shoulder, eliciting a sharp 'ow' from the dragon.

"What was that for?" Hiccup said loudly.

"Quit being so dramatic! Use your head Hiccup! You can't know unless you actually go! Stop making things up!" Astrid said loudly, getting a few looks from vikings that were in the area. Hiccup stared at the girl and nodded slowly, looking towards the ground. He brought up both paws and rubbed his face quickly before getting up and shaking his head.

"Fine. I'm going," Hiccup said monotonically. Astrid was annoyed by his depression, but then again, she took back that annoyance when she realized she wasn't there when Toothless left, or how the dragon was treating Hiccup. The annoyance was quickly replaced with relief that her friend could finally get some closure. The last thing she wanted was for her friend to be sad, and even worse, if he didn't cheer up soon, the vikings from other tribes would have to deal with a depressed instructor.

"Good," Astrid said quietly, watching as he friend stretched his wings some before lifting off into the skies. She waved at him, seeing him off as he flew into the distance, disappearing behind a wall of trees.

"He doesn't hate you Hiccup. That dragon loves you too much to ever do that," Astrid whispered to herself, her eyes where she last saw Hiccup.

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><p>Hiccup slowly landed a distance from the cove. The young Night Fury made his way closer to the enclose space, hearing a small splashing sound as he drew closer. Peering over the edge, he saw Toothless staring into the lake, his paw splashing in the water slowly. Even from the distance, Hiccup could see the dragon looked exhausted as if he hadn't slept in days. Hiccup slowly made his way down, landing softly on the ground. Toothless closed his eyes for a bit then snapped them open when he heard soft footsteps heading in his direction. The Night Fury got up and stared at Hiccup, the two a distance apart.</p>

"Just tell me why," Hiccup said quietly. Toothless looked as if he was glaring at the young Night Fury, but Hiccup couldn't tell if it was anger in his eyes or something else.

"Go home Hiccup," Toothless said, sounding as if he was struggling to say anything. Hiccup shook his head quickly and took a cautious step forward.

"I'm not going home unless you come with me," Hiccup said, "Bud, you look exhausted...just please...come home." Toothless stared at the younger dragon and grit his teeth together.

"Go home Hiccup!" Toothless yelled angrily, his eyes turning to sharp slits, "You can't be here! I don't want you to be here!" Toothless looked as if he instantly regretted those words, but stood by them either way. Hiccup's eyes widened, taking a few steps back. He had

never been yelled at by Toothless before...not in this way. Hiccup felt as if his heart was being stabbed over and over, a few tears welling in the dragon's eyes.

"You...you really do hate me, don't you?" Hiccup said quietly with so much hurt in his eyes that it was killing Toothless on the inside. Toothless watched as streams of tears flowed down his Hiccup's face and landing with soft 'plops' onto the ground beneath him. The Night Fury did something he never thought he would do. He made his love cry.

"I...I-I-I love you...please," Hiccup said, taking another step back. Toothless looked on in agony seeing his dragon cry. Hiccup turned around and spread his wings, ready to take flight. A strong force suddenly whipped Hiccup around, pulling him into a tight embrace, catching the young Night Fury off guard.

"I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry Hiccup," Toothless distraught voice said. Hiccup quickly hugged the Night Fury back, afraid he'll lose him once again.

"I didn't mean to make you cry!" Toothless said, hugging the dragon tightly before quickly letting him go and retreating away. Hiccup stood there in confusion and slight fear.

"Just tell me why! Why is it so hard for you to just tell me!" Hiccup said, transitioning into a yell. Toothless looked over his shoulder at the dragon and nodded his head quickly.

"Because I don't want to do something to hurt you," Toothless said quietly, the Night Fury clawing at the ground hastily, "It's mating season, I can smell it and it's driving me insane. Any other year would've been fine, I would've succumbed to my urges and \_fucked \_anything around me. I can't do that, I can't do that, I can't be unfaithful to you. If I stayed at the house with you, who knows what I could've done! I could've attacked you and forcefully mated with you, \_repeatedly\_! It's the smell, the air, my instincts that are clawing at my head! I have to stay here a little longer! I can't let it get to me! I can't let it get to me!" Toothless clawed at the ground harder, trying to keep his mind clear of doing anything to Hiccup. He couldn't force himself onto his love like that and the fear of hurting him surged through him, keeping him from acting on anything at the moment. Two paws suddenly wrapped around Toothless, hugging him tightly.

"Then...then give into your instincts," Hiccup whispered out, almost inaudible, "M-Mate with me Toothless. I love you...and I can't stand to see you suffer like this. Mate with me...and come back home," Toothless' breath caught in his throat hearing those words. The Night Fury had mixed emotions and truly didn't know what he should be feeling at the moment.

"I...I could hurt you," Toothless said quietly. Hiccup nodded slowly, his head pressed against the Night Fury's back.

"I know. I'm not...gonna lie and say I'm not scared...but if it helps you then I'll do it," Hiccup said quietly, "Anything to help you, anything to get you back." Toothless turned around kissed Hiccup long and sweetly. The dragon stopped quickly and breathed heavily, leading Hiccup to the nearest cave. The young Night Fury's heart pounded

heavily, pulsating through his body quickly. Entering the cave, Toothless cleared a place for the both of them to rest, motioning Hiccup closer. The smaller dragon nervously made his way closer, his breath quick and his body trembling slightly. Toothless was visibly having trouble holding himself together, but managed a soft lick on his partner's head.

"Tell me to stop if it hurts, okay?" Toothless said, "If I don't listen, push me off, hurt me, to whatever you can to get away from me alright?" Hiccup nodded quickly, his eyes tinged with doubt.

"I've...I've never done anything like this before," Hiccup squeaked out. Toothless smiled gently and nodded his head.

"I'll try to make you happy," Toothless said quietly. Hiccup laid down on the hard ground and stared up at Toothless who hovered above him. The two stared at each other for a few long moments. Toothless closed his eyes and gently kissed Hiccup. Breaking away, Toothless stared down at his dragon.

"Are you ready?" Toothless said through heavy breathing. Hiccup nodded his head quickly and closed his eyes tightly, embracing for pain but let out a soft moan when the dragon felt a tongue roll across his sheath. After few more quick licks, Hiccup's member slowly made its way out into the warm are. Hiccup could feel Toothless' warm breath on his dick, arousing the young Night Fury even more. Toothless slowly dragged his tongue up Hiccup's length, causing the inexperienced dragon to shiver and moan lightly. Hiccup was lost in a world of ecstasy he'd never felt before. Toothless heard his love's soft moans of appreciation and continued his licking, then slowing sliding his lover's member into his mouth, inch after inch. Hiccup's claws scraped against the floor in response.

"T-Toothless!" Hiccup moaned out, ushering the Night Fury on, "I'm gonna...ya know," Toothless slowly pulled his dragon's length out of his mouth.

"How was it?" Toothless asked, being met with loud breaths.

"It was...great," Hiccup squeaked out, his face blue from embarrassment. Toothless smiled gently and put a few claws into his mouth. Pulling them out, he looked to his love.

"Are you ready?" He asked gently. Hiccup breathed deeply and nodded his head. Toothless slowly inserted a claw, making sure not to hurt his love. Hiccup couldn't say it felt bad, or hurt too much, but it definitely felt different and weird. Toothless slowly inserted another finger in after he deemed the time right. Hiccup felt a little more uncomfortable but tried not to let it show and faked a moan. Toothless felt a little encouraged by that and slowly stuck in a third. Hiccup bit back a cry of pain and breathed deeply. After a few minutes of foreplay, Toothless pulled his fingers out and started to lube up his own cock. Hiccup stared into his Night Fury's emerald eyes as he positioned himself over the smaller dragon.

"Are you sure you want to go through with this?" Toothless asked quietly. Hiccup nodded his head and closed his eyes tightly. Toothless slowly pushed his head into Hiccup. The young Night Fury clenched his teeth together and hugged onto Toothless tightly, trying

not to show any pain. Toothless pushed in further, slowly going inch by inch until he was all the way in. Hiccup's eyes were swelling with tears, but he wanted to make sure Toothless got the urge out of his system. He wanted his dragon back, and if it meant sex, then he'd submit willingly. In all honesty, Hiccup was happy Toothless could be the one, even if it did hurt, it was a bonding moment, a moment that tied the two together.

"You doing okay?" Toothless whispered, his voice shaking in attempts to restrain himself from outright plowing into Hiccup. The young Night Fury nodded his head against the dragon's shoulder. Getting the signal, Toothless slowly pulled out and pushed back in. Hiccup out a short pained cry, causing Toothless to stop where he was.

"Am I hurting you?" He asked worriedly. Hiccup shook his head quickly and breathed.

"No, no," Hiccup said, trying to say fine. Toothless pulled Hiccup down a bit so he could stare at him, face to face. The Night Fury could see the pain that was in Hiccup's expression and he felt his stomach drop.

"I am hurting you," Toothless said quietly, "Why didn't you say anything?" Hiccup looked away, wiping a few tears from his eyes.

"I want to do this for you," Hiccup said quietly. Toothless looked down at him and sighed.

"I can't...not if I'm going to hurt you like this," Toothless said, starting to pull out when Hiccup's paw stopped him. Looking down, he saw Hiccup's pleading eyes.

"Please, just do it," He whispered out, "I want you to come home. I want us to be closer, and this will help us do that. Do it for us." Toothless looked down at his dragon and smiled gently, leaning down to kiss him. Pulling away, Toothless nodded slowly.

"Okay, but tell me if it's too much," Toothless said, a tinge of worry filling his voice. Hiccup nodded and Toothless resumed his slow thrusts. Hiccup closed his eyes again, trying not to focus on the pain, but any pleasure that he could be feeling at the moment, hoping focusing on that would amplify it. Hearing a few moans escape Toothless' mouth made the pain worth it. Toothless thrusts slowly started to pick up speed and formed a steady rhythm. Hiccup endured, holding onto Toothless tightly. Toothless reached down and slowly started pumping Hiccup's length, causing the dragon to feel mixed emotions. The pain was slowly fading and the pumping was causing him to feel all sorts of pleasures.

Toothless moaned out as he picked up more speed, causing some of the pain to return. Hiccup bit back a yelp and bit down lightly on Toothless, trying to focus on the paw working on his length.

"Just a bit longer," Toothless whispered out, pumping faster and harder. Hiccup had a hard time concentrating, feeling himself getting pumped over and over again. The feeling wasn't too pleasant as it was his first time, but he had to start sometime.

"Just a little more," Toothless almost yelled out, his teeth gritting together. Hiccup was a little surprised to feel his love's member

throbbing inside him, pushing itself deeper into the smaller dragon. Hiccup suddenly yelled out in pure ecstasy when he felt Toothless hit something inside him. Almost immediately, Hiccup came, sending strings of cum over the two of them. Not long after Toothless roared out, sending stream after stream of his Night Fury cum into Hiccup.

"Are...are you okay?" Toothless asked through deep breaths. Hiccup nodded, his mind still fuzzy from the sudden jolt. Toothless slowly pulled his length out, moaning as he laid down next to Hiccup. Reaching a paw out, the Night Fury slowly caressed his love's cheek.

"I'm so sorry I got you into this," Toothless whispered out, "I knew I was hurting you, but I couldn't stop myself...I just kept feeling the urge to go on." Hiccup looked at his dragon, seeing so many conflicted feelings flash across those brilliant eyes of his. Hiccup quickly leaned in and kissed his dragon, bringing them closer together.

"Toothless...I love you," Hiccup said, almost whispering it out. Toothless looked at his dragon, and smiled happily, licking his dragon's head affectionately.

"I love you too Hiccup, more than you'll ever know," Toothless whispered out. Two dragons, two 'I love you's, two lives forever intertwined.

"Promise me you'll stay," Hiccup asked, his voice lined with fear. Toothless' smile quickly disappeared and he nodded quickly.

"I never want to see you cry...I can't stand to see the one I love cry," Toothless said, "I promise to always be there, but promise to be here by my side," Hiccup stared at the dragon, a small smile forming upon his face. The young Night Fury nodded his head slowly, his eyes tearing up.

"I promise to always be here with you, Toothless," Hiccup whispered out. The two Night Fury's locked in each other's embrace, kissed passionately as the sun drifted lower in the sky, nothing to disturb them. Just a boy and his dragon.

### 23. Chapter 22

Sunlight seeped through the small cracks in the Night Fury's home and into the eyes of a young dragon awaking him from a sound sleep. Hiccup woke up, quickly shielding his eyes from the sun. He felt weird, his back was hurting and mildly scrapped, his wings felt sore, and lastly, he had trouble walking for a pretty specific reason. Hiccup groaned softly as he got up to stretch slightly, looking around the room.

"Toothless?" Hiccup called out, exiting the room slowly and awkwardly. The young Night Fury was met with a loud 'morning' from a female voice. Astrid was sitting in a chair next to the fire pit, bringing her legs up to rest on a small tree stump. Hiccup was still groggy as he slowly made his way down the stairs, heading towards the kitchen area to get some water.

"Why are you here?" Hiccup asked tiredly. Astrid popped her fingers and stared at the dragon as if she expected the question.

"Like I said yesterday, and the day before that, I'm staying here for a few days along with Snotlout to give our guests more room. Stoick made it clear he didn't want strangers in your house, and I'm pretty sure the arriving vikings would be pretty uncomfortable living in the same house with two dragons, who are in a relationship, oh, and one talks too!," Astrid said quickly and teasingly, "Anyway, what's wrong with you? You look like you've been hit by a herd of Hogs." Hiccup nearly choked on his drink when the question suddenly came up. Glancing at the young viking with a small uncomfortable smile, Hiccup shook his head quickly.

"Oh nothing, nothing. Must've just slept weirdly I guess," Hiccup said nervously, trying to downplay the fact his body was aching from his first time the day before. Astrid raised a brow at the dragon, seeing through his charade any five year old could decipher.

"No really, what's up?" Astrid said, getting up from her seat and quickly getting closer to the dragon, inspecting him closely.

"What? I said I slept weirdly is all," Hiccup insisted.

"Hah, yeah right," Astrid said loudly, looking over the young dragon, noticing the scrapes on his back and wings, the way he was sitting, and the ached look in his eyes. In a few moments, Astrid pieced together the puzzle and her mouth dropped open staring her friend.

"You didn't," Astrid said with a devious smile on her face. Hiccup looked at the girl nervously, his eyes looking anywhere but directly at the young viking.

"Did what? I didn't do anything," Hiccup said, his voice cracking in the middle. Astrid's smile grew wider as she twirled around laughing.

"You so did! I can see it written all over your body!" The young viking said loudly, "You and Toothless had se—" Astrid was quickly cut off by a large paw covering her mouth. Hiccup looked around the room quickly and at the door, listening for any activity outside.

"You. Cannot. Tell. Anyone," Hiccup whispered out frantically. Astrid pushed away the paw and stared at the dragon with a wide smile.

"So how was it?" Astrid asked, jumping up and down, "Did you like it?" The girl teased the dragon to no end, making Hiccup blush hard and made an effort to hide it.

"I am not going to talk about this," Hiccup said, turning away from Astrid who quickly whipped around him and looked at him dead in the eyes again.

"Oh come on! Did it hurt? I bet it felt soooo gooood," Astrid said, making a flustered face and changing her voice to sound very sexualized towards the end, making various sexual noises and moans. Hiccup laughed nervously at the sight and backed away towards the door, quickly being cut off Astrid who blocked his path yet

again.

"Give me something to go on," The young girl insisted, her eyes staring at him deviously. Hiccup stared at the viking with wide eyes, an uncomfortable smile on his face.

"It hurt a lot," Hiccup said quietly, "Kay, bye!" With that the Night Fury awkwardly ran past Astrid and out the door before skidding to a halt and poking his head back inside.

"So, uhm, where's Toothless?" Hiccup asked quickly. Astrid stuck her tongue out teasingly at the Night Fury.

"Give me some juicy details first," Astrid teased.

"Oh kay, I'm leaving now," Hiccup said, backing out of the doorway.

"Okay, okay!" Astrid said through light laughter, "He's at the docks with the chief, probably waiting for the other tribes to arrive." Hiccup raised a brow at the young viking who returned to her chair, lazily throwing herself onto the fur covered furniture.

"Weren't you always the one yelling at me for slacking off and not taking things serious?" Hiccup asked teasingly. Astrid laughed sarcastically slunk lower into the chair to a more comfortable position.

"While you were busy sleeping, I was out early today for a few routine patrols. I deserve this," The young viking girl said, stretching and getting comfortable in her chair, "I'll be down when I need to be." Hiccup rolled his eyes and said his goodbyes to the girl. Stretching his wings out and wincing slightly in pain from their use. Flexing them in and out a few times, he took off into the skies and towards the harbor. In the distance, Hiccup could see an approaching ship that came from the direction of the island of Stein, and another coming from the east from the island of Gunnar, and a third from the west, a visibly smaller vessel sailing from the smaller settlement of Eydis. Hiccup slowly descending near the docks, stretching his wings again and retracting them back, feeling mildly sore all over. The young Night Fury slowly made his way down the stairs of the docks, seeing Toothless, Stoick, and other vikings awaiting the ships to come into port. Hearing the soft creaks of the wooden planks, Toothless turned his head to see his love slowly making his way over. The Night Fury silently slipped away from Stoick and went to meet Hiccup half way, earning a soft smile from the younger dragon.

"I'm sorry for leaving you alone like that," Toothless said in a regretful whisper, "How're you feeling?" Hiccup nuzzled into Toothless affectionately, tiredly, and a little angrily.

"Next time, don't choose a cave floor. My back is killing me, my butt hurts like nothing i've ever felt before, and, I had to wake up in an empty room," Hiccup said, "And, uhm...Astrid kinda knows...what we did." Toothless' eyes widened as he looked around quickly, before turning back to his love.

"Did you tell her?" He asked surprised. Hiccup gave him an annoyed look and shook his head.

"Yes bud, I have a habit of telling people about my sex life," Hiccup said sarcastically, "No, she pieced it together somehow...in like, five seconds...is it that obvious?" Toothless looked at the dragon, certainly hoping it wasn't that obvious.

"Hiccup!" Stoick shouted happily, walking towards the two dragons waving a hand. Hiccup gulped loudly and nervously answered.

"H-hey dad," Hiccup said uncomfortably, averting his eyes from his fathers. Stoick raised a brow at his son and looked over the young dragon.

"So what's wrong with you?" Stoick asked quickly, gesturing to all of the young Night Fury. Hiccup's ears perked up and he looked at his body as if he hadn't noticed anything before now.

"Oh, I just, slept weirdly last night," Hiccup said, rather convincingly. Stoick shrugged and motioned for the two to follow him.

"Alright then. Anyways, the ships are going to arrive in the next, oh, twenty minutes or so," Stoick said returning to his position in front of the small crowd of vikings, "So I want everyone on their best behavior, got it?" The chief held a convicting finger up, mainly pointing to the twins in the middle of the crowd.

"I'm not gonna promise anything," Ruffnut said.

"Yeah what she said," Tuffnut said, pushing his sister before being pushed back. In a matter of moments they were having a fist fight in the middle of a crowd with Stoick looking on, a hand on his head, sighing heavily.

"Will you two knock it off?" Gobber said, smacking the both on the heads before joining Stoick at the front of the crowd, "This is serious business. Never before have we done something that involved so many tribes, let alone inviting them all to Berk as well." Stoick nodded his head to his right hand man.

"He's right, this is something that is new to us. Change has been the theme of Berk lately, and it's going to stay that way for a while longer from the looks of it. We need to show the rest of the tribes that progress is what the viking world needs. We need peace between dragons and vikings. We need unity between our warring tribes. We need to put our differences aside as vikings and accept each person, dragon, whoever, for who they are, and not who we assume they are," Stoick said, looking towards Toothless at the last part, winking to the dragon, "Let's show them what we can achieve when vikings and dragons live in peace!" Stoick raised a hand in the air, calling for all his vikings to join him on this grand revolution of the viking world. All hands went up in cheers for their chief, wanting him to lead Berk to a brighter tomorrow. Granted he'd be doing more of the diplomatic and political matters while Hiccup, Toothless, and the other teens train the vikings to become not only see dragon's as allies, but as friends who they can depend on time and time again.

"Alright! Our time is limited before the ships arrive! Everyone get to your places! Let's show these vikings what Berk hospitality is

made of!" Stoick shouted enthusiastically, getting a small uproar of positive shouts from the group of vikings before they quickly disbanded. Hiccup and Toothless slowly made their way towards Stoick and Gobber who were quietly debating internal affairs.

"What do you need Toothless and I to do? You never really specified anything for today," Hiccup asked quickly, wanting to be away from his father before he started piecing together the events of the previous night like Astrid did. Stoick shrugged his shoulders at the young dragon.

"I don't really have anything in mind for now. You'll only need to be around starting tomorrow when training first begins. Until then, you won't need to be doing a whole lot unless I call for you," Stoick said, turning to the ocean to watch the Gunnar vessel draw closer to port, the first tribe to arrive. Gobber glanced at the ocean then looked back Hiccup, noticing his awkward posture and achy look on his face. The old viking first raised a brow curiously and sniff the air lightly before his mouth fell open in a surprised grin.

"You didn't," Gobber mouthed out. Hiccup quickly shook his head back and forth, running a paw over his throat. Stoick looked over towards the two dragons, Hiccup quickly bringing his hand down. The chief looked at his boy curiously but shrugged it off.

"You two don't have to stick around if you don't want," Stoick said, taking a few steps back from the dock's edge, getting a better view of the incoming vessel. Gobber nodded his head slowly in approval to the two young dragons. Hiccup and Toothless laughed uncomfortably and slowly backed away from the two old vikings.

"Haha, okay, bye!" Hiccup said, turning around quickly with Toothless, flying to the top of the stairs quickly. Stoick watched his son and his dragon leave quickly and awkwardly, slowly shaking his head.

"I don't know what's up with that boy," Stoick said softly, turning back towards the ocean.

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><p>Hiccup and Toothless walked slowly towards their home, the streets deserted as most vikings were busy getting ready to host a viking or were down at the docks awaiting the ships to come into port. As the two walked along, their pace seemed to slow with each passing step, until Hiccup came to an eventual stop, with Toothless looking at his love curiously.</p>

"What's the matter?" Toothless asked soothingly, "What's on your mind?" Hiccup uncomfortably fiddled with a rock in his hands for a few moments, allowing a short silence to grow between them. Toothless came closer to the smaller dragon, standing in front of him, his worried eyes looking down.

"So...what did last night really...mean?" Hiccup asked quietly, "Like in the dragon culture...does it mean anything or?" Toothless looked down at his lover's paws and put them in his own. Hiccup slowly looked up from the warm paws wrapped around his and into his Night Fury's eyes.

"Do not get me wrong Hiccup. I love you. I love you so much," Toothless started off, "but last night was not how I wanted our first time go. I was pent up and it's mating season...so I...went a little haywire. I want so badly so say that last night meant something...but I can't lie to you or myself. It's mating season...meaning that most dragons just...have sex...and get on with their lives...a season solely for the purpose of reproduction. You let me give in to my urges and get it out of my system. Hiccup I...I just...If we. I don't know how to say this without making it sound horrible. We had sex...but we didn't mate. Dragons usually mate for life, and I couldn't force that onto you, so we just...had sex." Toothless' chest pounded, fearing that he'd hurt his Hiccup.

"I...I love you Hiccup, but the way I was...the way I was acting...I couldn't let that be how we mated," Toothless squeaked out, shutting his eyes tight and pulling the smaller dragon into a tight embrace. The Night Fury's heart trembled in the first few moments when there was no response from his dragon. Toothless realized he was holding his breath when he felt Hiccup's paws slowly wrap around the dragon, breathing the air out slowly with a shaky breath.

"Toothless," Hiccup asked quietly, "What does it mean...to be mated?" Toothless took a short breath and collected his thoughts.

"It's sort of like...how vikings marry...only stronger and deeper like an irreplaceable bond that forms between the two," Toothless said quietly. A few quiet moments went by which felt like an eternity to the Night Fury waiting for his love to talk.

"Toothless?" Hiccup said quietly, his eyes coming up to meet his dragon's, "Toothless I...I...I want to be...I want to be...your...mate." Hiccup closed his eyes tightly and hugged his dragon. A few moments went by and Hiccup's heart trembled not feeling Toothless' arms around him and the young dragon feared the worst had happened. Hiccup breathed out deeply when he felt two strong paws wrap around him.

"When this is all over...I'll gladly take you as my mate," Toothless said happily, "I love you so much Hiccup." Hiccup hugged his dragon even tight, never wanting this warm feeling in his chest to leave him.

"I love you too, Toothless," Hiccup said, almost whispering. The dragon's could hear the sounds of the docks increase as more vikings poured onto the island of Berk, but for now, the two dragon's were content in each other's embrace.

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><p>The two dragon's push their way through the door of the house, smelling freshly cooked fish in the air. Astrid was sitting with Snotlout having one of their usual talks. Snotlout hits on Astrid, Astrid punches Snotlout, Snotlout enjoys the pain and doesn't get the hint. The viking girl jumped up from her seat quickly, thankful to be intruded on.</p>

"Hey you two!" She said quickly, throwing her remaining scraps away, "Have the ships docked yet?" Hiccup stared at her in surprise.

"You mean you haven't heard how loud the harbor is?" Hiccup asked,

getting an annoyed look from Astrid. She held up two fingers and counted down her list.

"One, I'm not a dragon, two, try hearing anything over his obnoxious voice," Astrid, pointing towards Snotlout who was stuffing his face full of fish, clearly not paying any attention to the conversation going on a few feet from where he was sitting. Hiccup and Toothless laughed lightly before Toothless suddenly stopped and perked his ears up, followed by Hiccup. The two turned towards the door in time to see Johan burst through the door. His breathing was deep and ragged, seeming to have just run from the docks to their home in record time.

"Sorry...to burst in...like this but...Dagur," Johan started off through deep breaths, "Dagur...kind of...escaped from...the Berserker...prison..."

#### 24. Chapter 23

I apologize for the delay in chapters, life got pretty busy lately. Expect regular updates again.

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><p>Hiccup's heart pounded in his chest as he took on into the air with Astrid on his back, flying as fast as he could towards the harbor with Toothless following close behind. The trio swooped down quickly, landing on the dock with a loud thud as they ran towards Stoick arguing with another viking. Getting closer, Hiccup realized it was Iona herself who had come to relay the news. Seeing his son arrive, Stoick breathed a sigh of relief and motioned towards Iona.</p>

"Alright, let's hear it!" Stoick said angrily, "How could this have happened?" Iona shifted on her feet uncomfortably, trying to collect her thoughts and how she was going to explain the situation. Hiccup's head raced with any possible scenario that could've played out, and the harder he tried to focus, the more he found himself slipping into a deeper level of hysteria. Feeling a wing wrap around him snapped Hiccup out of his thoughts and into the current situation. Taking in a breath deep and breathing out, Hiccup cleared his head completely and looked towards Iona as she opened her mouth.

"Well you see, it's kind of a funny story," Iona said, laughing nervously. Stoick glared at the young girl.

"Funny story? One of the most dangerous vikings to ever set foot upon this world is now running loose!" Stoick shouted, "Spill it!" Almost immediately, Iona's soft and carefree nature disappeared. She slowly brought herself to stand up straight, her smile faded along with the life in her eyes, replaced with a cold stare. Her complete demeanor changed from a youthful viking to a stern and mature chief.

"You forget I'm alive, Stoick. If anyone can defeat him, it's me," Iona said, her voice cold and hollow. Her tone sent chills down Hiccup's spine. She so quickly changed her entire personality and became this terrifying woman.

"I foolishly let my guard down during my weakest moments and blinded

myself. I overlooked the fact he could very well have supporters who would aid him in whatever scheme that fool created. Needless to say, by the time I returned, he and his few supporters had fled with no way to track them down," Iona said coldly, "Knowing him, he'd come to seek revenge as soon as he could, meaning the first place he's likely to strike is here. Well, he thinks like me unfortunately, so he already knows I've come here to warn you. His next plan of attack is amassing an army or uniting a few tribes with grudges against you."

"And what about you? Won't he attack your village, your people?" Stoick asked quickly and sternly. Iona glanced at the older chief and shook her head.

"Out of all the things he would do, killing his own people is somehow revolting to him," Iona said to the chief, "Unless they get in his way, he'd never think of hurting his own tribesmen. As for my life in particular, it's always going to be threatened as long as that fool is alive." Stoick nodded his head in agreement as he began pacing the floor in thought.

"So, what do you propose we do?" Hiccup asked quietly, feeling out of place. Iona's eyes shifted to the young dragon and immediately the warmth returned to her. A small smile popped up on her face and she relaxed her body.

"I was hoping to learn from you," Iona said sweetly, "To form an alliance with Berk and try to mend our relationship with the Berk vikings." With that, she bowed her head in respect to Stoick, offering him her respect, trust, and loyalty.

"I hope that one day we could be great allies," Iona said confidently. Stoick put a hand on her shoulder, motioning her to look him in the eye.

"There's no need for this Iona," Stoick said with a smile on his face, "You always reminded me of your father...and I can see now, that you'll be the chief he could only dream of being." Iona smiled and nodded her head appreciately. The older chief turned to the village, motioning to the island around them.

"But it's not me you need to convince, it's the rest of Berk," Stoick said sternly, "It's going to be a while before they're ready to trust Berserkers again, but give it time, and they'll see you for, well you. I will let you stay on Berk for the time being along with the other tribes to train with dragons, but your priority, as well as everyone's priority, should be the capture of Dagur."

"Until he's captured, it will be my prime priority," Iona said, "With all of us in the same place, I feel he'll act soon, even if he's unprepared." Stoick looked towards the younger vikings and dragons watching on, and he turned back to Iona, nodding his head slowly.

"We're stronger than we were before," Stoick said strongly, "We have allies, skills we didn't have before, something worth fighting for, and this time, this time we're prepared." A cheer ran through the small crowd surrounding the scene. The sudden noise scared Hiccup, causing him to fire off a plasma blast into the air with a decent size explosion. Hiccup's face immediately went blue from

embarrassment and the many eyes looking his way. The embarrassment was quickly replaced with an uneasy joy when the vikings around him quickly rose back up in cheers, exclaiming how 'awesome' and 'cool' it was. Hearing footsteps coming closer, Hiccup turned to see Iona making her way towards the two dragons. Hiccup could hear a soft growl growing in Toothless' throat as the Berserker came closer, the Night Fury pushed the smaller dragon behind him some as the young chief came closer. Iona stopped in front of the two, ignoring the growl steadily increasing in volume emanating from the dragon in front of her. Instead of listening to the sign of aggression, she simply smiled at the dragon and held out a hand.

"The first time we met didn't exactly go over so well," Iona said happily, "Let's start over." The growling slowly came to a stop as Toothless stared at the girl confused, watching as she removed her armor and weapons, tossing them to the side. The young viking chief raised her hand up once again, holding it out in a handshake like gesture.

"I'm not hoping you'll trust me so soon, but, I do hope you'll at least give me a chance," Iona said quietly. Toothless stared at the girl, seemingly unwavering by her words. Hiccup nudged Toothless in the side, bringing his attention back.

"If my dad trusts her, then I think we should too," Hiccup said quietly. Toothless turned back to the girl, and stared at her again, sizing her up. Getting another prod at the side, Toothless reluctantly rose a paw up and shook her hand awkwardly. The young chief breathed a small sigh and smiled at the two dragons gratefully.

"Thank you, and I'll try my best to show you I'm a good person," Iona said, bowing respectfully to the Night Furies. Toothless tilted his head to the side and looked back at Hiccup.

"It's a display of respect," Hiccup said quietly, getting a soft 'oh' in response, "Just, bow back." Toothless turned back to the bowed chief and returned the gesture awkwardly. Iona straightened herself, and politely excused herself, returning to Stoick to discuss politics. Toothless stared at the human, watching her intently.

"She seemed like a nice girl, but there's just something about her that I don't like," Toothless said quietly. Hiccup stretched his legs and wings, letting a short yawn escape his lips.

"Could it be that she's a Berserker, or that she's Dagur's sister?" Hiccup asked, moving closer to his dragon. Toothless shifted uncomfortably, a small yawn escaping his lips as well.

"It just feels like she's hiding something," Toothless said softly, "I don't know what, or to what degree, but there's something in the way she carries herself." Hiccup looked at Toothless, seeing the disgruntled look on his face and sighed softly.

"Right now there isn't much we can do about it bud," Hiccup said, nudging his love, "Come on, let's get going."

"Oh, Hiccup!" Iona yelled, prompting the pair to turn back towards the young chief, "I hope your back heals soon!" The chief winked at the dragon, prompting Hiccup to turn away immediately, his face

tinged with blue.

"Thanks!" Hiccup shouted before taking off into the sky, a quick surge of pain coursing through his back. Toothless was just about to take off when a small body plopped down onto his back.

"You guys completely forgot I was here," Astrid said with slight annoyance. Toothless laughed uncomfortably as he flew into the sky after Hiccup.

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><p>Hiccup lay awake in the dark, wishing sleep would just come and take him away. The warmth from Toothless, his steady heartbeat and slow breathing should've lulled Hiccup to sleep quite easily, but tonight, it just didn't seem to work. After a few more minutes of laying awake, Hiccup slowly moved out from Toothless grasp, holding his breath. Once he was free of the Night Fury's hold, Hiccup slowly made his way out the door and down the stairs, the soft creaking of wood echoing throughout the room.</p>

"Where're you goin?" Snotlout asked, half awake. Hiccup opened the front door and looked back to the drowsy viking.

"A walk," Hiccup said quietly, being greeted with a thumbs up before Snotlout plopped his head back down onto the soft pillow. Closing the door softly, Hiccup glanced around the area. A few torches were lit here and there, but the streets were pretty much deserted, save for a dragon or two still lurking about. Stretching his legs a bit, the young dragon made his way towards the edge of the village to a nice cliff that overlooked the sea. Hiccup remembered the night on that very cliff where he shot down Toothless. The young Night Fury shivered a bit, regretting ever hurting his dragon like that.

Hiccup made his way past the last few houses of the village, and started his way up the incline. Breaking through the treeline, he noticed a figure at the top of the cliff, the moonlight creating a silhouette. The person looked over it's shoulder and motioned for Hiccup to come closer. Hiccup started to back away when he realized who it was.

"Guess we both had the same idea," The soft female voice said. Hiccup saw the girl wipe away a few tears as the dragon approached her.

"You couldn't sleep either?" Hiccup said, sitting himself down next to the young woman. The girl smiled gently and nodded her head.

"I find it difficult to sleep in a bed that's not my own," she said softly. Hiccup noticed something, that her usual youthfulness had faded and was replaced with a soft and gentle tone.

"I know what you're going to say," Iona said softly, "A chief should never show weakness." Hiccup looked at her curiously and shook his head slowly.

"Actually, I was going to ask why you were crying," Hiccup said, looking towards the chief as she picked apart a blade of grass. She nodded, a small smile forming on her face.

"Thank you," Iona said, regaining some of her composure, "It's just been hard this past month or so, never really got time to let it out." Hiccup watched as the young chief looked towards the sky, doing the same as well. The night sky swirled with colors and lights, illuminating the dark expanses of space.

"I'm actually surprised you even trust me in the slightest," Iona said quietly, "I'm a dangerous Berserker after all." The young chief smiled, saying the last part with sarcasm.

"Truth is I hate violence and would rather settle things diplomatically than through meaningless bloodshed," Iona said, getting up and stretching herself, "Of course my people can be easily swayed one way or the other, I'm determined to make sure they actually have a set of morals to follow." Hiccup watched as the young viking popped a few bones and stretched her legs.

"So, I never got an explanation on how you became a dragon," Iona said expectantly, a wide smile on her face. Sitting back down, she turned to face Hiccup, ready for a story.

"Oh uhm," Hiccup said, the thought never crossing his mind, "Toothless and I were in the market one day, and I got a headache like nothing I've ever felt before. I was too numb to even move." Hiccup felt his stomach lurch remembering the horrible pain.

"From what others had told me, I was on the ground screaming and squirming for several minutes before it finally stopped," Hiccup said quietly, "Just an average day and suddenly I'm a dragon. The first few days were difficult, you know, turning into a dragon, dad thinking it was Toothless' fault and almost killing him, the usual." A small chuckle escaped the womans mouth as she listened intently to the boy's story.

"I thought I had been cursed by the Gods for befriending a dragon and forced to live out my days as a dragon, but Gothi, our elder, convinced me differently. She told me the story of Raul and Dreki, of their battle. I realized that if I used this gift right, I could unite vikings and dragons for good," Hiccup said, a proud smile forming on his face when he reached the end of his sentence, "I don't know why they chose me, but I'm determined to show them I can do this gift justice." Iona smiled at the dragon and nodded her head enthusiastically.

"I guess we both a rough few weeks," Iona said with a smile. Hiccup nodded his head in agreement. The young chief looked back towards the sky and breathed in slowly.

"I do hope we can be friends Hiccup," the chief said confidently. Hiccup looked at the girl curiously and nodded his head in agreement.

"So do I," Hiccup said in response, "My dad seems to think highly of you." Iona nodded quickly and laughed a bit.

"He's always liked my dad, and I guess I'm a lot like him," the young woman said with a happy smile, "Unfortunately, my brother takes after his grandfather and is literally insane." Hiccup wondered what her home life must've been like before all this. Probably pretty hectic and with lots of fighting.

"I think I trust you Iona," Hiccup said, "Don't be afraid to come by my home if you ever feel the need." Hiccup smiled at the young woman, feeling like he was truly getting to know her better. Iona bit her lip and her eyes widened a bit, grabbing her stomach.

"Oh, thank you," She said awkwardly, "I'll be sure to do that." Hiccup looked at the young chief with worry.

"Are you okay?" Hiccup asked cautiously. Iona brought a hand up to her mouth and nodded, looking away quickly. After a few moments, the young viking got up and quickly walked away from Hiccup, careful not to face him.

"Thank you, I'm fine," She said nervously, "I guess I'm just not feeling well, if you'll excuse me." With that, the chief quickly ran off back towards the village, off to Stoick's home where the tribe leaders were staying. Hiccup was a little confused at her sudden sickness, wondering if she had some sort of virus, internal injury, or something to cause sudden pain.

"Either that, or she really is hiding something," Hiccup said quietly. The young Night Fury slowly made his way back towards his home, the stars twinkling in the sky. The village streets were still as empty as before, only few torches remained lit casting long shadows down the abandoned streets. Hiccup slowly pushed open the door of his home, hearing the loud snores of Snotlout as he entered. The young dragon fought back a few giggles as he closed the door and climbed the stairs. Entering his room, he carefully slid next to Toothless, making sure not to wake him.

"Mm, where did you run off too?" Toothless said, bringing Hiccup in close. The young dragon purred softly against his love and nuzzled into him.

"I couldn't sleep, just a short walk," Hiccup said quietly, making himself comfortable. Toothless purred in response and made sure his love was comfortable.

"I'm glad you're back, I was getting lonely," Toothless said, nestled up against Hiccup. The smaller dragon laughed softly, closing his eyes as the two dragons slowly drifted off into sleep.

## 25. Chapter 24

Hiccup's heart thumped as he and Toothless flew towards the Dragon Academy, the arena already filled with vikings awaiting their instructor. Butterflies flew in the young Night Fury's stomach, intensity increasing as the pair drew closer to the arena. Unfortunately, the both of them had overslept and were late to their own class. Very professional.

Toothless glanced over and saw his love with a very frantic look on his face. The dragon couldn't help but smile at Hiccup, thinking of how cute the dragon looked. Almost as if he was telepathic, Hiccup looked straight over at the dragon.

"I'm worried about us being late and you're just thinking dirty thoughts aren't you?" Hiccup said a little too loudly as they passed

over the village, causing a head or two to turn. The young Night Fury raised a brow expectantly, waiting for a response. Toothless laughed uncomfortably, and flew a little farther ahead of the dragon.

"Hurry up!" Toothless called back playfully, "It's not professional for an instructor to show up late!" Hiccup puffed up his cheek and stuck his tongue out at the Night Fury, flying fast to catch up.

"You're an instructor too ya know!" Hiccup said once he had caught up to Toothless. The Night Fury's eyes widened as he looked over to his love, his mouth opened wide.

"What do you mean?" Toothless said loudly, "Why do I have to?" Hiccup stuck his tongue out at the dragon playfully and flew ahead of him quickly.

"Hurry up!" Hiccup called back mockingly, "It's not professional for an instructor to show up late!" Hiccup laughed as Toothless chased after him, easily overtaking him and grabbing onto the smaller dragon. The pair quickly broke off once they realized they were very close to the arena. Down below, Hiccup could make out the small figure out Astrid in front of a group of vikings.

"They'll be here soon!" He could make out Astrid yelling, "Just be patient for a little while longer. Something must've come up for them to be so late!" Hiccup bit his tongue lightly, angered with himself for putting Astrid in such a situation. Swooping down low, the duo quietly land outside the Academy and make their way in slowly. Many eyes curiously turn towards the pair of dragons making their way through the front gate. Among those eyes, Hiccup spotted a few familiar faces. Calder the chief of the Gunnar tribe, Sassa the chief of the Stein tribe, and Frey chief of the Magnhild tribe were a few of the faces the dragon recognized.

"I was beginning to think you got cold feet there dragon," Calder said light-heartedly, making his way towards the dragon, closely followed by Sassa and Frey. The three chiefs took it upon themselves to greet their instructor.

"I've been here for a few days and this is the first time I've seen you two!" Calder said in his usual light hearted tone, putting his two large hands on the dragon's shoulders, "I'm excited to begin learning, not only from dragon trainers, but also from two dragons themselves." The chief had a wide grin on his face, saying his final thanks to the two before taking a few steps back to let Sassa greet the two. She was much more delicate and formal about her approach, bowing slightly to the pair and keeping herself looking tall and proper.

"It truly is an honor to learn from you two," Sassa said in her strict monotonic voice, "On my behalf, Stein thanks you for allowing such an opportunity and we hope to forge a lasting alliance with Berk. Vikings, dragons, and all that fall in between are welcome on our shores." Hiccup and Toothless bowed their head respectfully to the great chief as she took her place among her men. The final chief was the old Frey. He was a old and wise chief who had seen many battles, heard many tales, and countless legends stemmed from the man's incredible feats. The old chief slowly made his way towards the two dragons who waited patiently. Stopping in front of the two, Frey

looked over the two young dragons, his careful eyes piercing through their tough hide and into the deeper workings of their hearts.

"I thought I had seen and heard it all in my many years," The old chief said softly, "but I never could have been more naive. The miracle of life and the gifts that it brings never cease to amaze me. I know you two are on a path that will forever change the viking world. I, Frey of Magnhild, put my faith, trust, and hope into you two dragons and all who you befriend. You two will bring a new light to our world, and I hope I may be around to see it. Mentor us so that we may be the bearers of this light, in the hopes that we too, can change our worlds." The old chief reached for his belt, detaching a bottle and twisting it open. Frey dipped his fingers into the red liquid and approached the dragons, carefully painting twisting lines onto the dragons faces along the cheeks and above the brow. Stepping away, Frey stared at his work.

The two dragons looked at each other, marveling at the interesting symbols draw upon their faces. From Toothless' point of view, he saw soft curving lines that drew around his love's face melodically. From Hiccup's point of view, he saw hard, attacking lines that ran around his love's face commandingly.

"Please, accept my symbols of protection to aid you in the future," Frey said softly, "The melodic curving lines of Hope and Faith. The callous twisting lines of Strength and Change. These are just a few of the distinctive traits that you both embody. Use your gifts wisely young ones, hone them, conquer them, for there will be a day when they'll decide the fate of our world." With that, the old wise chief bowed away from the two, leaving them in surprise, certainly not expecting that very motivational speech. The two looked at each other and nodded gratefully, both thinking to wear these symbols into battle for hope, faith, strength and protection.

"Thank you Frey," Hiccup said, bowing his head in respect. Noticing that Toothless wasn't paying attention, he flicked his head with his tail. Toothless was dragged from his thoughts, bowing when he noticed the other dragon doing so.

Looking up, Hiccup gazed over the small crowd of foreign vikings. They certainly didn't seem ready to ride dragons and looked rather nervous being here.

"Hello, I am Hiccup, one of your instructors for the next few weeks," Hiccup said, noticing a few people slightly jump hearing him talk, "I hope we can get along well." With a smile, Hiccup looked towards the vikings, noticing the forced smiles many of them were giving them. Scratching his head, Hiccup tried to remember what it was they planned to do first.

"Since it's our first day, let's start off with the basics," Hiccup said strongly, "We will be using a flight simulator so that everyone can get used to the sensation and get some much needed experience without the danger of actual flight." The crowd slowly shifted towards the back of the arena where the simulator was being set up thanks to a few helpful Berk vikings. Seeing the crowd wander towards the back, Hiccup approached Astrid.

"I'm sorry I put you in that situation," Hiccup said apologetically. Astrid smiled and waved her hand at the apology.

"It's nothing, I'm sure whatever it was that made you late was important," Astrid said before walking off to help set up the rig. Hiccup laughed nervously as he watched the young viking walk away. Toothless sat next to Hiccup and nudged his shoulder.

"Shouldn't the Berserker chief be here?" Toothless asked blandly. Hiccup looked at his dragon confused before looking back at the crowd of vikings, noticing that neither her nor the few vikings she brought along were among them. Even though Hiccup knew next to nothing about Iona, he couldn't help but trust the young chief. Sure, she seemed off in many ways, but there was something about her that felt so familiar, yet Hiccup could never figure out what. With an honest smile, Hiccup shrugged off the situation.

"I'm sure they're running late," the young Night Fury said, "We can't be the only ones who slept in a little." Toothless looked at the young dragon with unsure eyes.

"I would believe that if it were just one of the Berserkers, but they're all missing," Toothless said quietly, "I told you something was off about her." Hiccup raised a brow at his companion and shook his head quickly.

"Listen, I know you don't trust her, and I do admit there is something off about her," Hiccup said, "and I can't explain it, but there's something about her that makes me want to trust her." Toothless ran a paw down his face quickly, trying to clear his thoughts.

"I know you think you trust her," Toothless said quickly, "but maybe that's what she wants Hiccup!" The young Night Fury shook his head and stalked off.

"Astrid!" Hiccup called out, getting her attention, "I'm leaving you in charge. I've got something to do." The young viking nodded her head confused, but shrugged it off and returned to directing the rig.

"So you're just going to go look for them?" Toothless asked, "Without anyone to back you up?" Hiccup stopped and turned to his dragon, an interesting smile upon his face.

"Well I've got you don't I? Now hurry up," Hiccup said, turning towards the entrance only to almost run head on into Iona herself. She put her hand out to stop the dragon, being received with a quick 'eep' of surprise. The young chief smiled and laughed happily.

"Sorry I'm late, I might have slept in," She said scratching her head in guilt, "and my men apparently didn't want to leave until I had awoke, and yet they didn't wake me until I woke on my own," She said the last part, glancing over her shoulder accusingly at her men who had found a sudden interest in the skies above Berk.

"Sorry if I kept you waiting, and that's a nice look on you two" Iona said with a smile. Hiccup smiled back, trying not to show he felt a little relieved that another party had arrived late besides him.

"We were actually going to see if you guys were okay," Hiccup said

light heartedly, "I'm sure you didn't want to miss the first day of Dragon Academy."

"Yeah!" Iona cheered happily, charging into the arena, her vikings close behind her. Hiccup quickly stepped aside and watched as the vikings rushed past a very confused Toothless towards the now complete dragon flight simulator. Walking towards Toothless, Hiccup had a smile on his face.

"See, nothing to be suspicious of, just overslept," Hiccup said quickly, sitting next to Toothless to watch the vikings try one by one to overcome the flight rig. Hiccup was the one who originally designed it and he was still pretty proud of this achievement that helped new flyers get used to the twisting and swirling that flying creates. Still, it was no where near to actual flight, but it was a stepping stone.

Toothless glanced to the side, noticing the happy look on his love's face, yet he still couldn't shake the feeling that something was off about the girl. She seemed overly happy, as if she's overcompensating for some obvious flaw that Toothless could never figure out.

\* \* \*

><p>Viking after viking tried out the flight simulator, many losing their stomach by the time it was over. Every vikings seemed to have much difficulty remaining on the rig with several falling off, getting disoriented, or gave up. Hiccup's earlier enthusiasm slowly faded with each passing moment, thinking either his equipment was faulty, or that it was going to take much more work than he anticipated.</p>

Iona, being the kind chief she was, waited until her vikings had gotten their turn before she herself went on. Hiccup noticed how she walked with her usual confidence, breathing deep relaxing breaths as she climbed the rig, making herself comfortable. With a quick nod, she signalled for the simulation to begin. Hiccup looked closer, something quickly catching his eye. Iona was saying something under her breath, but he couldn't quite make out the words. Suddenly the rig quickly moved, but she remained calm and loose, allowing her body to flow with the rig as if she'd been flying all her life. Every viking looked in wonder, seeing how gracefully she moved. Iona far surpassed even Hiccup back when he could fly with Toothless. The duo had been unmatched before now, and she wasn't even with a dragon, just herself. Suddenly, as if she'd lost all experience, she went rigid and flung off the rig, the safety harness keeping her unharmed. Iona quickly unbuckled herself and fell to the ground, sticking an excellent landing.

"How was that?" Iona asked nonchalantly with a unsuspecting smile. Hiccup stared at the girl with a gaping mouth.

"Let me guess, this is where you tell us that you've never ridden a dragon before?" Astrid asked quickly, a look of complete disbelief painted across her face, "When? Where? How?" Iona scratched her head and laughed, shrugging off the blatant accusation.

"It was beginner's luck, honest," The young chief said with a smile.

"And where was that luck for everyone else?" Astrid asked again, taking a step forward and gesturing around the crowd of confused onlookers.

"That's a good question," Iona said, scratching her chin. Without warning, the young chief coughed out blood onto the floor in front of her.

"Oops," Iona said, spitting out some of the remaining blood and wiping it from her chin. A Berserker woman was quickly by her chief's side. The older woman quickly whispered into her chief's ear in an urgent tone. Her voice was too quiet for a normal set of ears, leading Toothless to listen in closer.

"I told you no, that could've done worse things to your body," The woman said quickly. Toothless nudged Hiccup, nodding his head towards the two and moving his ears slightly. Getting the signal, Hiccup tuned in as well, having more trouble than Toothless, but trying none the less.

"Are you finished showing off? You know that one was way out of your league Iona. Like I said yesterday, keep this up and it's going to tear you apart from the inside out!" The older viking whispered, being met with a hard stare from Iona. Hiccup caught his breath, slowly walking towards the two. Iona quickly raised a hand to silence the older viking who backed away from the approaching dragon. With a numb smile, the chief wiped away the final few drops of blood.

"Sorry about the mess I made," She said apologetically, "I can't promise it won't happen again, but I'll try my best to keep it to a minimum." When she realized the sudden shift in the dragon's usual behavior, her smile slowly faded.

"Is something wrong?" She asked cautiously. Hiccup took a few steps closer, looking at the small pool of blood and back towards the young chief who seemed to be in perfect health.

"What's really going on?" Hiccup asked quietly, "You've always felt...off to me. You look like you're in perfect health...so why are you coughing up blood?" The chief smiled vaguely and looked toward the small puddle on the ground, marveling at her own blood. How it reflected the light of the sun and irradiated with the life that runs through veins, but also with the signal of death fast approaching. There was something in that reflection, like something was falling.

No, something really was falling. Looking up, Iona quickly caught sight of a heavy metal beam falling directly onto Hiccup. No one noticed it, no one reacted to it. The world around her just seem to die out seeing a life in danger. The young chief quickly raised a hand.

"¡„¡±¡•¡¬¡¶¡‰!" Iona quickly shouted. Hiccup looked confused, then noticed a purple sort of blast come from thin air. It flew quickly over his head, creating a loud 'bang' as it collided with a heavy beam that was above his head. A beam that must've been a few hundred pounds flung easily to the wall of the arena with a loud crash. Slowly turning his head back to the chief, he saw the look of absolute horror on her face.

"Shit," Iona whispered quietly, falling her knees.

\_ " \_\_ \*\*Witch\*\* \_\_ ?" \_

\_ "What \_\_ \*\*is \*\*\_\_ she?" \_

\_ "Should we \_\_ \*\*kill her\*\* \_\_ ? She could \_\_ \*\*curse\*\* \_\_ us or something!" \_

\_ "Those \_\_ \*\*damned Berserkers \*\*\_\_ always have something!" \_

\_ "Seriously? A \_\_ \*\*Witch\*\* \_\_ ?" \_

A part of Hiccup was terrified, never before had he met a witch and he'd always heard gruesome tales of their curses, but then the young dragon stopped and thought.

\_ "Maybe this was what I felt that was so familiar? Another person living with a curse, trying to survive in a world where you are considered an enemy," \_Hiccup thought, quickly noticing a few vikings with axes getting close to the girl. The young Night Fury quickly jumped in front of her, defending her from the approaching vikings. Soon after, Toothless was by his side, followed by Astrid.

"What are you doing?" one viking yelled, "She's the enemy! She's a \_witch\_! She'll kill us all!"

"How long ago did I seem like the enemy?" Hiccup yelled in response, "Stop treating everything that's unknown as an enemy! I'm sick and tired of such a closed minded world where everything that isn't like you gets written off as dangerous and then killed! Don't you dare stand there and claim you're an ally of Berk, only to quickly turn around and kill an innocent person! She's like me, a human given a curse! A human who takes a curse and uses it for good! If she was so evil as you all would like to assume, why would she save me? Why would she spread a message of peace and acceptance? Why would she do any of the kind acts she's done?"

Silence drifted between the many vikings.

"She must've put a spell on-" a viking a beginning to say. Iona had interrupted the scared vikings by puking up some more blood, effectively silencing the group once again.

"Oops," Iona whispered, falling to the ground quickly. Astrid quickly jumped and caught her.

"Thanks," She said, trying to regain her balance before falling back over, "Nope."

"You idiot!" That same old woman yelled, rushing to her chief's side once again, "That was way too much! You could've killed yourself!" Iona smiled strongly at her friend, sticking her tongue out playfully.

"I'm not that weak Brenna," Iona said, regaining some of her strength, "I didn't know how heavy that thing was so I just put my

all into-"

"Somebody kill that witch!" A voice rang out. Calder quickly turned around and punched the loudmouth right in the jaw, sending him to the ground. Turning back, he raised his hands in the air as if admitting defeat.

"Take my advice," He said loudly, "We're here to learn how to fly dragons, from a talking Night Fury, and just met a witch-"

"Sorceress would be a nicer term," Iona cut in.

"Just met a sorceress. I think it's about time we stop questioning things. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to take a nap and reflect on my life up until this point," Calder said quickly, walking out of the arena with many vikings from all tribes doing exactly what he did.

Sassa and Frey approached Iona who was busy trying to regain her balance.

"I once met a sorceress a good decade or two ago. I only saw her for a few moments, and in that time she managed to turn my hair a bright blue," Frey said with a soft laugh, "I can certainly say it was quite the experience. I wish you luck in the future." With that, the old chief left the arena slowly. From what little he knew about the old chief, Hiccup thought highly of him, seeing Frey as a peaceful old viking, worn out from many years of battles. Sassa approached Iona with a wide smile and patted her on the back, which caused the young chief to recoil a bit in pain.

"I thought you'd never tell this secret of yours," Sassa said. Hiccup's mouth dropped open again in surprise.

"How did you know?" Hiccup asked rather loudly. Iona and Sassa laughed lightly and smiled at the young dragon and his companion who forever looked on in wonder.

"Sassa is my aunt," Iona said cheerfully, holding a thumbs up. Sassa nodded her head lightly and confirmed the statement.

"I left the Berserkers many, many years ago to marry their future chief...and when my late husband died, I was given the title of chief," She said, her voice trailing off towards the end, "but that isn't the point."

"The fact is, you have a sorceress on Berk."

## 26. Chapter 25

The sun reached its peak over Berk, signaling a break for most of the working villagers on the island. During this time, Hiccup, Toothless, and a few vikings were with Iona as she healed in Stoick's home. The fire crackled in the pit and many questioning faces peered at the young Berserker chief as she sipped water from a small cup, regaining her strength from earlier that day. Iona looked up from her bed stationed near the firepit and at the faces of those who were there with her. Hiccup, Toothless, Astrid, Stoick, Gobber, Spitelout,

Frey, Calder, Sassa, Brenna, and a few more faces. Honestly the room was starting to feel a little cramped.

"So, if she has magical powers of some sort," Spitelout whispered to Stoick, "Why didn't she break out of her cell on the Berserker island? Why didn't she do a lot of things actually?" Iona cleared her throat rather loudly, causing her to cough a few times. The young chief stared unamused at Spitelout who quickly shut his mouth. Pushing herself up for a more comfortable position, Iona popped a few bones and yawned.

"You can see what it does to my body. Even if I got out of my cell I wouldn't get far," Iona said, "I'm still a novice. Those spells, like the spell of balance, and the spell of agitation, those are more complex and require much more skill. I only know a few spells that I can actually perform at my level, and they are rather useless." Toothless tilted his head in curiosity and nudged Hiccup. The smaller dragon looked to his companion, tilting his head as well.

"Yeah?" Hiccup asked quietly. Toothless leaned in close, glancing towards Iona.

"I really wonder what those spells were," Toothless said, a few different ideas going through his mind ranging from changing hair color to making someone's feet twice their original size.

"Oh nothing too crazy really, mainly just minor spells. Stuff like stealth, hearing, vision," Iona said. Toothless' ears perked up and his curiosity satisfied.

"That was convenient," Toothless said, "Good thing she likes to hear herself talk." Iona's jaw dropped and she stared directly at the dragon, obviously offended.

"I do not like to hear myself talk you jerk!" Iona yelled angrily, coughing at the end. Everyone looked at her confused, wondering who she was yelling at. Toothless and Hiccup stared in slight disbelief.

"I think she's starting to lose it," Gobber whispered to Calder quietly, the chief nodding his head in agreement. The two Night Furies stared at the Berserker chief, quickly realizing the situation.

"You know at this point something like this should be expected," Hiccup said, looking over to Toothless who nodded in agreement. Scratching the back of his head, Toothless looked over towards Iona, trying to avoid direct eye contact.

"So, how long?" The Night Fury asked quietly.

"Since we first met," Iona said unhappily, "Though I didn't know I'd meet a dragon so rude."

"Rude?" Toothless half yelled, "I'd say my suspicions were justified!"

"What, my personality is suspicious? Do I seem so untrustworthy?"

"That's not it! You're just horrible at keeping secrets?"

"Oh is that a fact?"

"I'd say it is!"

Iona stuck her tongue out at the dragon who returned the gesture. Hiccupped in between the two, thinking how unbelievably childish they were acting.

"Are you two twelve or what?" Hiccup yelled, "I've heard Bucket and Mulch have more intelligent arguments than you two!" The two sat back and pouted at each other, avoiding eye contact, waiting for the other to apologize.

"Are you serious?" Hiccup said, groaning and clawing at his face lightly, "Just both of you apologize!" After a few moments of looking each other over, the pair shared a reluctant apology. Hiccup let out a deep sigh of relief and noticed the many eyes staring at them in confusion. Noticing the situation, Iona hopped out of bed quickly and rubbed her hands together.

"Okay, this mind sting a bit," Iona said, sticking a tongue out the side of her mouth.

"Wait, what?" Calder asked loudly, mildly scared for what was about to come.

"Í ÍuÍ¶Í;Í³Í•Í±Í†Í-Í± Í'Í•Í°Í;Í...", Iona chanted, moving her hands over the vikings in the room. After a few moments a purple mist slowly moved down each individual before dissipating into the floorboards. Once the mist was gone, Iona put her hands down with a cheeky smile. The vikings looked around at each other and felt their bodies, making sure everything was there.

"I don't feel any different," Stoick said cautiously, "What is it you did anyway?" Iona smiled at the older chief and lifted her head high.

"You'll see," The young chief said before returning to her bed with trembling legs, "Maybe I should just stop with the magic and stuff for a while before I die." The vikings still looked around expectantly with nothing happening.

"I'm getting the distinct feeling she has no idea what she's doing," Toothless said blandly, not amused with this woman. All eyes in the room turned to the two Night Furies with wide eyes and open mouths. At first, Toothless was very confused, but after a few long seconds of piecing the situation together, he figured it out.

"I seriously don't even know what to think of the world anymore," Toothless said in defeat. Hiccup laughed uncomfortably, patting his love on the back comfortingly. Astrid scooted closer to Toothless and eyed him curiously.

"I didn't expect that," Astrid said curiously. Toothless tilted his head at the young girl.

"What do you mean?" The Night Fury asked quickly. Astrid laughed lightly and punched the dragon's shoulder.

"I kinda imagined your voice being more rough, and deep, and feral," She said softly, "but it's so smooth, and fair, and pretty normal. This is just too weird." Toothless didn't really know how to respond to that so the dragon just shook his head and looked away.

"Thank you, I guess?" He said awkwardly causing Astrid to laugh.

"You two really are just alike. Smart and brave, but awkwardly and kind of clumsy," the young viking teen teased.

"I am not clumsy," Toothless said confidently, shrugging off the girl's insult.

"Uh, Toothless, your tails on fire," Hiccup said softly, prodding the dragon's side. Toothless looked over his shoulder and realized he'd placed his tail just a tad too close to the fire. Quickly whipping his tail, the dragon put the fire out before any major damage was done.

"Right, not clumsy at all," Astrid teased. Toothless sighed heavily and walked out of the house in annoyance. Hiccup laughed uncomfortably as he ran after his love, apologizing on the way out.

"Get better soon, Iona!" Hiccup called as he pushed his way out of the door, being met with a thanks and several goodbye's. Catching up to Toothless who had stalked off into the village, Hiccup jumped in front of the annoyed dragon.

"What's up with you?" Hiccup asked softly, a bit of worry in his voice. Toothless breathed heavily and moved passed the smaller dragon.

"She just. That girl. I don't what it is about her, but she just makes me so angry for some reason. I don't know why, I just," Toothless said, clawing at his head lightly, "I just don't trust her. It's probably because she's Berserker, but then again I don't trust anyone of our guests we have here on Berk. Ever since Dagur, I don't think I can trust other people again. I just keep imagining them attacking Berk, betraying our trust, killing people with love...killing you. They may turn out to really be our allies. Iona could very well be the greatest ally we have in the future, but every single one of those chief's and their vikings are going to have to earn my trust. Until then, I'm not letting them get to close."

Hiccup sat back and listened to his love's rant about the new arrivals and his issues with them since the Berserker invasion. He understood where Toothless was coming from, but a pool formed in his stomach realizing that his dragon's trust was shot. Thinking back, Hiccup realized that he could've been the one to open Toothless up, get him to trust again. The invasion must've stirred some emotions involving the Hive and how brutal it was in there mixed with the destruction of his new home, the death of vikings he saw everyday, and the pain suffered by the one's he loved most. While Toothless was deep in his one sided conversation, Hiccup slowly made his way closer and eventually hugged his dragon tightly, making him stop mid-sentence. There was a few moments where silence filled the air

before strong paws wrapped around the smaller dragon.

"Thank you," Toothless said quietly. Hiccup nodded against the dragon, feeling his heartbeat and warmth.

"Don't be scared," Hiccup said quietly, "I'm not going anywhere. I'm never going to leave you. I love you." Toothless smiled at the words and nodded slowly.

"I don't want to remember life before you...a life without you Hiccup," Toothless said slowly in a smooth whisper, "I love you too. I'll never leave your side."

\* \* \*

><p>The bright moon shone down on the island of Berk, illuminating the dark that swept through the world. Soft footsteps echoed through the streets. The young Berserker chief slowly made her way back to the cliff she'd been on the previous night. Iona never could sleep in a bed that wasn't her own, so she hoped the night air would clear her thoughts enough to sleep. Climbing the final stretch, the chief let out a sigh of relief as she sat down near the edge. The night sky above was painted with countless shining stars shimmering down on the islands below.</p>

"Ah," Iona whispered to herself, "This is nice." A comfortable cold air blew around the young girl, easing her burdens for a short time. The ocean below softly pushed against the cliff face creating a beautiful resonance that echoed throughout the young chief's tense body. It seemed as if her problems were a thousand miles away when soft footsteps broke through the sounds of ocean. Expecting Hiccup again, Iona looked back with a smile, only to see a small woman approach her.

"I'm sorry, I don't think we've met before," Iona said quietly. The elder smiled softly and motioned for the Berserker chief to follow. Iona looked on in curiosity as the old woman slowly disappeared from view. Shrugging, the young chief picked herself up and followed the elder. Slowly, the pair made their way through the village, the only sounds were their own footsteps echoing through the streets.

"So where is it you're taking me?" Iona asked quietly. Getting no response, the chief shrugged it off and glanced around the market they'd entered.

"The night sky never ceases to amaze me," A voice said softly. Looking up, Iona saw the two Night Furies on the roof of a house staring into the sky. Staring into the sky, Iona just saw the stars, nothing special. Looking back ahead, she saw the elder had made quite the distance. Iona sighed lightly and ran to catch up with the older woman, falling in line behind her in a few moments.

Hiccup glanced over his shoulder, hearing rapid but soft footsteps slowly fade away. The dragon saw Iona and Goths the Elder slowly making their way towards the Elder's home.

"Something wrong?" Toothless asked quietly. Hiccup turned back to his love with a smile on his face, shaking his head.

"No," Hiccup said softly as the pair looked back towards the

sky.

Gothi opened her door slowly as she made her way towards the other end of the house, lighting candles as she went along. Iona looked around curiously, noting the many old trinkets that littered the walls and floor of the small hut. The chief wondered how the old lady ever found things among the mess of scrolls, old metal parts, and baskets full of string. Gothi turned back towards the young girl and motioned for her to take a seat. Seeing that there really wasn't a proper place to sit, seeing as the chairs were cluttered with miscellaneous items, she opted to sit on the floor. After a few minutes of rummaging through a chest, Gothi pulled out a book, and some papers along with it. Slowly making her way back to Iona, she held out her hands, placing the book and papers in the chief's hand.

"A book?" Iona whispered, wiping the dust from the cover. The words were in Greek and were faded greatly. Opening the cover, bold words stood out in the center of the page.

"Î'Î¹Î²Î»Î-Îz Î|Î...Î»Î±Î‡Î, Î-?" Iona said in disbelief, "A Book of Charms? How did you get this? Where did you get this?" The Elder pointed to the bottom left corner of the page. In small characters, a name was written in Greek to conceal the owner's identity.

"Property of..." Iona trailed off, trying to read the name, "How did you get this?" Gothi smiled softly and shook her head, bringing a finger up for silence.

"You must not tell anyone of this book's origin," Gothi said weakly, "If they ask, tell them it was always yours...a gift from your mentor, if you had one, or something you had found while trading." Iona stared intently at the book and nodded her head in agreement.

"One question," Iona said, her eyes not moving from the old binding of the book. Gothi looked on expectantly, waiting for the question.

"I'm not even from here. I'm from another tribe, the Berserkers, you know, the one's that failed to invade? Why give me something so dangerous?" Iona asked. Gothi smiled softly and placed a hand on the chief's shoulder.

"Those surrounded by darkness emit the greatest light," Gothi said softly, "It takes great courage to change the world. Hiccup and his dragon show that courage and I believe you do too." Gothi paced around the room blowing out the candles that were lit.

"It is time for you to return," Gothi said quietly. Iona nodded her head, thanking Gothi as she exited the small hut. Once again, the night air echoed with her footsteps as she made her way through the quiet village. Passing through the market, she noticed the two dragons were no longer on the roof. She was half thankful, half disappointed. She would've liked the chance to talk to Hiccup again, but she'd rather not see Toothless. It wasn't that Iona didn't like him, it was the fact she knew the dragon didn't trust her, and granted, her attitude earlier wasn't exactly the best way to start a friendship. Iona sighed to herself and kept walking towards Stoick's home.

Quietly creeping into the house, Iona slipped into her bed and opened the book. Excitement pulsed through her body as she flipped past the opening pages, reading the opening passage quietly to herself.

"Chapter I: Introduction to Magic..."

\* \* \*

><p>Iona awoke with the book covering her face. She'd managed to read up to chapter six before falling to sleep mid-chapter. Taking the book off, she looked around the room, noticing it's vacancy.</p>

"Huh?" Iona whispered to herself. The chief got up, popped a few bones, put on proper clothing and stepped outside the door. The sun was a good ways into the morning, signalling class had started a while ago.

"Seriously!" Iona yelled as she sprinted towards the arena. In record time, she ran down the ramp of the Academy and stopped, noticing the crowd of vikings watching on as another poor soul tried his hand at the flight simulation. Seeing one of her vikings, she quickly ran up to him, whipped him around and grabbed him by the collar.

"Why didn't you wake me up?" Iona asked angrily. The viking apologized quickly and tried to explain the situation to an angry Berserker.

"I-I tried, b-but you said you'd turn my feet into frogs if I kept pestering you!" the viking said erratically. Iona breathed a sigh of regret and let the viking go as she apologized for her aggressiveness. Looking around, she noticed she had many eyes looking at her. Iona laughed uncomfortably and waved at the onlookers until they returned back to the simulation as the poor soul from earlier was flung off of it.

"It's not that difficult! Stop fighting the movements and learn to go along with them! A dragon isn't something you control. The dragon and the rider must become one. Learn to move with the dragon, not against it," Hiccup's voice rang out. The dragon looked over and smiled at Iona, motioning her over for a turn.

"Why don't you give it a try? No cheats this time," Hiccup said as Iona made her way closer to the rig. Climbing aboard, she strapped on the safety harness and signaled for a go. The rig started off slow and steady before picking up pace and intensity, mimicking real flight. Iona attempted to predict the movements of the rig, but she'd always be off. She'd hardly been on twenty seconds before she was flung off. Getting back on determined, she signaled for another go. Time after time she fell off but she demanded to be let back on, each time the chief felt as if she were getting closer and closer to understanding.

\_ "Move with the dragon?" \_ Iona thought to herself, "\_ How do I do that? Everytime I get on this thing I lose my grip. Maybe I'm not strong enough? No, Hiccup could do it and I heard he used to be scrawny. Think, think, how does a dragon fly? They're built to be streamline...streamline? What if I..."\_ Iona ducked down lower to

make herself more streamline. She was surprised when she realized just how easy it was to hang on. She dipped and rose with the rig, not struggling to keep a grip or control its movements.

"So this is what he meant," Iona thought to herself.

Hiccup looked on with a smile on his face, glad someone finally figured it out.

"I told you someone would've figured it out," Hiccup said happily. Toothless found himself slightly impressed by the Berserker and her persistence. That viking did save Hiccup yesterday, and she does seem determined to shed the bad image the Berserker's have. Maybe he should give the girl a chance.

Maybe.

## 27. Chapter 26

A cold breeze blew through the air, sending a chill down Hiccup's spine. The young dragon let out a drowsy yawn as he looked over the training vikings. Today's lesson involved attaching a harness to a dragon and using the wind to give the dragon an uplift for gliding, an exercise that the young dragon and Toothless had once used many months ago, in fact, they were on the very same cliff if Hiccup remembered right. A warm presence embraced Hiccup, paws wrapping around the smaller dragon and pulling him in tightly. Soft, heated breaths cascaded down Hiccup's back, sending another chill down along with it. The bigger dragon dragged his tongue from the smaller's neck to the back of his head in affection before resting his head gently on top of Hiccup's, a low purr rumbling in Toothless' chest. With a soft smile, Hiccup allowed himself to pull back into the strong arms of his love, feeling at ease.

"I see you finally got up," Hiccup said softly to his companion. Toothless grumbled tiredly and groaned out a reply.

"Why didn't you wake me? I could've come along," Toothless groaned out. Hiccup giggled under his breath hearing Toothless speak so groggily. Shifting to get more comfortable, Hiccup looked down at the paws wrapped around his belly and he rubbed them softly.

"You never sleep in that long, so I figured you were exhausted and let you sleep in for a bit longer," Hiccup said sweetly. Toothless smiled and slowly rubbed his love's stomach, loving the feeling of his dragon's smooth skin.

"I don't know how you could sleep through Snotlout's snoring," Toothless said quietly, a small laugh escaping his lips. Hiccup laughed softly along with the dragon and returned his gaze to the vikings. Already the previous riders had given up their spot for another to learn, everyone like clockwork without Hiccup's help. Training had gone smoothly these last few days and he certainly hoped it remained that way.

"Oh, did you happen to see Iona on your way up here?" the young dragon asked sweetly. Toothless' purring stopped almost immediately at the question. Even though Hiccup couldn't see him, he was sure the Night Fury was rolling his eyes.

"No, I haven't seen her," Toothless said, "In fact, I haven't seen her for a few days now." The dragon ended the sentence with a tinge of curiosity in his voice. Hiccup glanced up at his dragon with a smile on his face.

"Was that curiosity I heard in your voice?" Hiccup asked teasingly. Toothless snorted and flipped his head away dramatically.

"Why would I care what that untrustworthy..." Toothless began to say before trailing off, seeing that many eyes were staring at him. Maybe he was a little too loud. The dragon smiled awkwardly at the vikings who shrugged it off and resumed their training. Getting in close to Hiccup, the dragon whispered angrily at the younger Night Fury.

"I understand that vikings understanding dragons would help with the merging of two cultures, blah blah blah, but did she have to do it to everyone on Berk? Sure it used to be very inconvenient, but I'm not used to it," Toothless said, all sadness filling his voice. Hiccup couldn't help but laugh a little at the dragon's complaining. Hiccup got up and motioned towards the village.

"Let's go for a walk," Hiccup said softly, "Sorry Astrid, but I have a few things to take care of, do you mind watching them for a while?" Astrid looked over from watching a few vikings attempt to glide on the dragons who helped out, some of them getting off quickly from motion sickness. The young viking smiled, waved to the pair and nodded.

"I've got this covered, just be back soon," Astrid said before turning away to help a viking who was having difficulties. Looking over his shoulder one last time, Hiccup smiled at the progress they had made. Toothless nudged into Hiccup lightly, grabbing his attention away from the vikings and to the path ahead. Hiccup looked over with a smile and moved in closer to the dragon, their bodies occasionally rubbing against one another.

The young Night Fury's love for his companion never ceased to diminish, only grow with each passing day. Just the thought of Toothless was enough to motivate Hiccup to do anything. Just the sight of Toothless was enough to ease the young dragon's mind and put his worries to ease, if only for just a while. Just the warmth of Toothless was enough to make Hiccup feel as though the world around them slowed to let him enjoy the moment.

Toothless glanced over and saw Hiccup looking at the ground hazily. The dragon smiled, knowing that the dragon was either thinking, daydreaming, or both. The Night Fury always found even the smallest things Hiccup did just so graceful and captivating. Around Hiccup, he always felt himself. Around Hiccup, he always had that warm feeling inside, that fear of losing him fades seeing his smile, the awful memories of a past life no longer plaguing the Night Fury, not when his love was there.

"Hey Toothless, you wouldn't mind—" Hiccup started to say before tripping over himself and smashing his face into the dirt. Toothless looked back, feeling guilty that he found the sight so amusing.

\_ "As graceful as always," \_Toothless thought to himself as he helped the smaller dragon up. Hiccup shook the dirt off of his face and

rubbed his nose.

"Let me see," Toothless said lovingly, moving Hiccup's hands away slowly. From the looks, just an injury that would hurt for a few minutes and be gone. Smiling, Toothless licked his partner's nose affectionately and motioned forwards.

"You were saying?" the Night Fury asked, glancing over to Hiccup who was moving his nose around cautiously. His ears perked up and he smiled forgetfully and nodded.

"You wouldn't mind coming with me to check up on Iona would you? I know you don't like her, but can you try to at least get along with her?" Hiccup asked cautiously. Toothless thought about it for a few long seconds and shrugged.

"I don't know," Toothless said quietly, "If anything, I'll just keep my mouth shut." Hiccup forced a smile and looked back to the ground, feeling a sad pit in his stomach.

\_ "I remember the days when you were cautious to trust, but you were always quick to befriend someone. Just knowing that the world around us so easily took that away, that trust for another person, dragon or human. It's even worse knowing I was there and I couldn't do anything. I want you to trust again bud," \_Hiccup thought to himself. When he nearly tripped over himself again, Hiccup decided to abandon his thoughts for the moment and focus on walking and where he was going.

\* \* \*

><p>After being redirected to several different locations, Hiccup and Toothless approach the Berserker vessel that lay in the port. They'd traveled all across the village searching for the elusive Berserker chief, each person pointing them another way. The two dragons softly land on deck and make their way under. Down below, Hiccup could see candles lit around the young chief as she read through a book, twisting her hand in the ear as she whispered out words in a language unknown to the young dragon. Toothless stared at her cautiously, not really sure how to approach her. Iona's head snapped up hearing the creak of wood in front of her. Seeing the two, she smiled and closed her book gently, placing it to the side.</p>

"What can I do for you two?" Iona asked while stretching herself out, the sounds of popping bones and muscle bouncing off the wooden walls and reverberating around the room.

"We just came to check in on you," Hiccup asked with a slight smile, "I haven't seen you at practice the last few days and your vikings told me you were sick." Iona shrugged guiltily, and blew out a few candles.

"Sorry, I thought that would buy me some time to practice and not get in too much trouble," Iona explained, "I never got to practice magic as freely as this, but on Berk, I feel like just about anything is possible." With a smile, the chief walked passed the dragons and went topside. Up above, the two dragons watched as she did a few exercise routines in the cool air.

"I got that book from my first mentor many years ago, but she died

before I ever got to learn much," Iona said through heavy breaths, "I've hardly touched the book since then. I always feared I'd get caught with it so I always kept it hidden, but I know there has to be some secrets to this whole magic thing." Toothless looked at the chief suspiciously, thinking through the situation.

"So, you brought a book with you that could've easily gotten you killed...why?" The Night Fury asked, trying his hardest to keep the harshness out of his voice and managed a flat voice instead. Iona stopped her in place jogging and took a breather, thinking over the question.

"With Dagur on the loose, and with my position as chief, I needed to keep any incriminating evidence on me at all times," Iona said roughly as she began jumping jacks, "Besides that, I think some of these charms and spells will come in handy somehow." Hiccup smiled thoughtfully at the chief, happy that she could do what she loved without the fear of being discovered and hurt.

"I'm sure they will. Toothless and I need to get going and I hope you'll return soon," Hiccup said with a smile.

"I will, don't worry," the young chief said with a wink. The two dragons turned to leave, jumping off the boat and onto the dock with a soft creak of wood. After they were a few feet away from the boat, Hiccup stopped and turned back to the vessel.

"Don't over exert yourself Iona!" Hiccup called out, being met with a loud, 'okay.' Toothless nudged Hiccup, getting his attention.

"Hic, I think we missed practice," Toothless said quietly, looking up into the sky. Sure enough, the sun was past its halfway mark, signalling the end of practice for the day. As if to confirm it as well, the lunch bell went off for the working men and women around Berk, but that wasn't the main focus of Hiccup's attention.

"Did...did you just call me Hic?" Hiccup asked, blush on his face. Toothless looked away quickly, and coughed uncomfortably, a tinge of blush coating his cheeks. The Night Fury nodded slightly, too embarrassed to face Hiccup.

"Yeah," Toothless said softly, "I won't if you don't want me too." Hiccup couldn't help but smile and nuzzled into Toothless.

"It's not a problem Tooth," Hiccup said softly, earning a small smile from Toothless.

The two walked towards the other end of the dock, noticing a vessel had arrived while the two were visiting Iona. From the looks of it, the ship was from Stein and was built for speed. Two Stein vikings accompanied a boy in the front of the boat while a woman ran towards them. Hiccup and Toothless decided to hear what was going on, but remained a reasonable distance. The woman was frantic, asking what had happened. The wasn't what got Toothless' attention however, it was the boy. His gaze was lifeless, he looked pale, almost death like.

"I'm sorry Val, but your husband is gone," one Stein viking said sympathetically. The woman tried her best to keep her composure and

wiped away any tears that showed. She grabbed a hold of her boy and brought him close, hugging the boy tightly.

"Please, tell me what happen," Val asked one of the vikings. Before he could respond, the young boy whispered something that neither dragons could quite catch, but it was something that made the grown woman reel back in shock, staring at the boy.

"You...what?" Val said in shock. One of the vikings put a hand on Val's shoulder, getting her attention away from the boy. He looked stern, strong, and confident.

"Listen to me Val, Hackett's drinking had taken a nose-dive since you left. He never left the house unless it was to get more alcohol," the viking said sharply, "I know you don't want to believe it, but he was being abusive from what we can tell from Destin. Bruises all over his stomach and back, out of sight. The neighbors heard loud noises, yelling from Hackett, screams from Destin. By the time anyone had gotten there, Destin was fixed on Hackett's body with a knife in his hand." Val's eyes had been purged of any sadness that remained, and it took Hiccup off guard seeing them, how cold they were. The woman bent down and looked at her son, hugging him tightly once again.

"We need to leave Val. Gyda thought it would be best if we left Destin here with you," one of vikings said quickly. Val nodded her head and stood to watch the vikings board the ship and leave the harbor. Hiccup and Toothless decided it would be best if they left and the two turned to go, heading for the stairs. Glancing over his shoulder, Hiccup saw the two staring off at the ship slowly growing smaller. Hiccup was turning back when he heard the faint voice of Destin.

"Is it bad I liked killing him?" the boy said softly. Val looked over at her son, not quite catching what he said, she was too deep in thought to even begin to understand the world around her.

"What was that?" She asked softly. Destin shook his head and turned from the ocean, making eye contact with Hiccup. The dragon's eyes were wide with shock, not expecting that from such a boy his age.

"His eyes," Hiccup thought to himself in horror, "They're just like his, so cold and lifeless." Destin slowly smiled at Hiccup. The way his face twisted reminded Hiccup too much of him. Never before had he been so afraid of such a young boy.

"Hiccup?" Toothless said quietly, causing Hiccup to jump nearly out of his scales. Toothless laughed lightly and motioned towards the stairs.

"Are you coming or what?" He asked, noticing the fear in his love's eyes, "Is something wrong?" Hiccup looked back to the boy only to see him and his mother still facing towards the sea. The young dragon tried his best to show nothing was wrong and forced a smile.

"I thought I saw something," Hiccup said, shrugging it off. Toothless didn't buy it for a second, but decided it would be best if he left it alone.

"Then let's go home," Toothless said.

\* \* \*

><p>"Right, I'll be back in a few hours," Astrid called out from the door, prompting the two dragons to pop their heads out of their room, awoken from their early sleep, "Snotlout is out with Johan and Tuffnut, don't know when he'll be back but probably later than me." Glancing up at the two, she waved and closed the door behind her. Hiccup descended the steps quickly and opened the door quickly, looking out into night filled streets.</p>

"Have fun!" Hiccup called out, seeing Astrid not too far from the door. She smiled and waved, walking away into the dimly lit streets of Berk. Quickly, Hiccup was pulled back in and pinned to the ground. The small dragon tried to resist at the force keeping him subdued, only to find Toothless' lips pressed against his. All fighting quickly stopped as the two shared a deep kiss.

"It's just me and you tonight," Toothless said softly, breaking away from the kiss. The Night Fury slowly dragged a claw over Hiccup's stomach, sending shivers up the smaller dragon's spine.

"We could, do things," Toothless said in a nearly inaudible whisper, blush consuming his face. Hiccup's breathing was ragged and nervous, his heart beating hard against his chest.

"If...if you really-"

"And no sex!" Astrid yelled, nearly breaking down a door when she slammed through. The two quickly got up and looked away quickly, distancing themselves from each other. Astrid smiled, happy to ruin a moment for once.

"I leave you alone for a minute and you two are already going at it," Astrid said, walking towards a desk near the door and grabbing a few things left behind. Turning towards the two, she could almost feel the embarrassment radiating off of them. She laughed and walked back towards the door, opening and stepping outside.

"At least don't do anything the neighbors would hear," she said teasingly.

"They probably heard you yelling!" Toothless yelled back. Astrid shrugged her shoulders and quickly closed the door, happily on her way.

Both the dragons were left shifting uncomfortably, not really sure where to go from there.

"That just killed the mood," Toothless said, walking towards the fire pit and lighting it and sitting in front of it. Paws wrapped around Toothless' waist, and Hiccup pressed himself against the back of the larger dragon.

"Would it...would it hurt like last time?" Hiccup asked quietly. Toothless put his paws on his companions and squeeze them softly.

"I'll make sure it doesn't, and if it does, we'll stop. I don't want to hurt you," Toothless said softly. The door swung open quickly and

Iona burst into the room, kicking the door shut behind her as she walked towards the two.

"Hey, can I come in, thanks," she said quickly, her face jammed into her book. The two quickly separated once again and tried to act as normal as possible. Stopping in front of the fire pit, she raised her eyes from her book and looked at the two acting funny.

"Did I interrupt something?" she asked innocently. Hiccup shook his head casually and poked at the flames with a stick while Toothless stared at the ceiling almost vacantly. Iona nodded her head in a 'likely story' like fashion, but quickly brushed it aside.

"I said I'd find something important, and I did," Iona said quickly, holding the book towards Hiccup. The young dragon took the book carefully in his paws and looked at the page.

"I see," he said intrigued. Iona smiled and crossed her arms

"I told you it'd be important!" Iona said gleefully, rubbing her nose.

"I don't know what this says," Hiccup admitted. Iona's head quickly dropped in defeat.

"I forgot you can't read Greek," she said sadly before she took the book back. Sitting down across from the two, she pointed to the page.

"It's a curse to put it simply and a very powerful one at that," Iona said thoughtfully, "If I were even to attempt this at my level, it would kill me for sure. It would take an extremely skilled sorcerer to pull this off." Hiccup tilted his head in curiosity.

"You haven't told us what it is yet," Toothless said blandly. Iona's smile slowly faded and was replaced with a cold expression. The two dragon's knew something must really be wrong for her to act like this.

"The curse," Iona said coldly, "transforms a human into another being like a sheep, a pig, or a dragon." Hiccup's breath caught in his throat hearing those words. He felt like he should say something, but what? He tried to say something, but no words came out.

"For the curse to be rendered active, something of equal or greater value must first be sacrificed in order to perfect the transformation. Now, here's the tricky part about this one. This curse along with a few others of the higher degree can have its effects delayed by a maximum of a year. The curse can be lifted if the caster reverses the spell, broken through a counterspell, or the caster is killed," Iona said grimly. Hiccup's eyes shot up in, though he wasn't sure if he was happy, or sad that it could be reversed. Toothless immediately looked to Hiccup, seeing the mixed emotions in his eyes.

"If he turned back, would he leave me?" Toothless thought in panic,  
"Would you choose your humanity over me?"

"However," Iona said.

"However?" Hiccups asked anxiously.

\_ "However..?" \_Toothless thought with guilty hope.

"only within a week of the curse being originally casted , beyond that time limit, the curse becomes permanent until death."

Hiccup didn't realize it, but he had been holding his breath for a while now. Letting the breath slowly slip from his lungs, he smiled faintly, truly happy that it was permanent.

"Are you smiling?" Iona asked confused. Hiccup nodded his head and looked at his feet.

"If I could change back...I'd feel really tempted to try and become a human again, and I don't want that. Of course I'd stay a dragon, to be with Toothless, but just knowing the possibility was there would eat at me," Hiccup said softly. Toothless smiled and was internally screaming with joy.

"Wait, wait, wait," Toothless suddenly said, breaking his silence, "How do we even know he was cursed?" Iona looked down at the page and read through a few lines.

"It says here the subject who has been curse can experience intense migraines, body pains, loss of vision, fainting, weakness, and/or vomiting before the transformation occurs. The change itself isn't quick and can be extremely painful and if the change is drastic enough, meaning in a large scale, could kill the subject during the transformation or shortly afterwards. Do you remember experiencing any of these symptoms before hand?" Ion asked cautiously. Hiccup tried to remember and nodded his head. In truth, he'd blocked it away for quite some time and honestly did have trouble remembering the whole ordeal in detail.

"Okay," Iona responded before reading through some more of the text, "While they do have the form of the animal in question, they will not have the same instincts. They will retain their humanity until their dying breath." Toothless was silence by the response, certainly not expecting the entire ordeal to match up with Hiccup's.

"Look, if he really was cursed, who would do it? Why would they?" Toothless asked convictingly. Iona couldn't give and answer and had to shrug.

"I don't know, but it would have to be someone extremely powerful. I don't know anyone like that. My mentor was barely twice my skill and she died many years ago," Iona admitted. Hiccup stared into the fire, wondering who and why. The young dragon got the feeling his questions wouldn't be answered anytime in the near future. It would take much investigating and time to figure this one out.

"Listen," Iona said, breaking Hiccup from his thoughts, "We should keep this a secret alright? I don't know what the other vikings would do if they found out you were actually curse. They think you're a sign from the Gods, a gift in disguise to unite two enemies. Can you imagine what they'd do if they found out they were wrong? I know they would be out for my head, seeing they know I'm a sorceress now, and they could just as well hurt you two."

"But Gothi told me that I this was a gift from the gods," Hiccup nearly whispered out. Iona got up and put a hand on the dragons shoulder comfortingly.

"It still means something Hiccup, even if it wasn't them directly. They control the hands of fate, they set you on this course," Iona said quickly, "I'm sorry, but I've been here longer than I should have. I need to go, take care you two." Iona quickly hugged Hiccup and released him. Turning to Toothless, she hugged him as well, catching the dragon off guard but he reluctantly hugged back. She quickly exited the house, waving a hand behind her.

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless put the fire out and the pair walked back to their room. Closing the door, Toothless approached Hiccup who was already half asleep on their makeshift bed. The bigger dragon layed next to Hiccup and pulled the smaller dragon in tightly. Feeling the warmth of his dragon always made Toothless feel at ease. The dark room consumed the two with the gentle glow of moonlight drifting through the cracks of the closed window. A peaceful atmosphere quickly engulfed the small home, giving anyone inside a chance at a good night's rest.</p>

"Hiccup?" Toothless whispered softly. The smaller dragon's ear flicked and he shifted his head slightly.

"Yeah?" Hiccup asked quickly and quietly.

"Do you love me?" Toothless asked nearly inaudibly. Hiccup turned over to face his lover, wondering what was going through his mind.

"Of course I love you," Hiccup said sweetly, "What's on your mind?" Toothless found it hard to look at him directly, and he wasn't sure why.

"If you could, would you change back?" Toothless whispered out, "Would you leave me?" Hiccup felt a pit form in his stomach at the question, remembering what he said and how he must've looked thinking it over in his head.

"Toothless," Hiccup said softly, "I don't think I would ever want to change back, not when I have everything I ever could've wanted." Toothless smiled and licked his love affectionately, with Hiccup returning the gesture. Soon, after a while, Hiccup could feel the slow steady breathing of a sleeping Night Fury trying to lull him to sleep, but the dragon couldn't. He was still plagued by the question.

"If I could change back, would I?"

The truth is, Hiccup had to face the reality of the question and the real answer he refused to give to his love.

"I don't know."

Hiccup shifted around, trying to get more comfortable in sleep and ended up resting in a patch of sunlight that quickly woke the dragon. Opening his eyes unhappily, the dragon decided to get up anyway. He stretched himself out some and walked towards the window that was bringing the light in. The sun was a good ways across the sky, signalling the approaching end of morning.

"It's later than I thought," Hiccup said to himself quietly. The young dragon looked out at the village that flowed down into and out to the sea. It was getting colder out, but not enough for discomfort for the dragon. Taking a step back, Hiccup closed the window quietly and made his way out of the room, smelling cooked fish. Slowly descending the stairs, he could see Toothless watching over fish near the fire. Toothless heard the creaking of the wooden stairs and turned to Hiccup, a smile on his face.

"You're lucky we didn't have any class today," The dragon said teasingly, turning back to the fire, "You'd be so exhausted." Hiccup shrugged sleepily and sat next to Toothless, who laughed softly at how exhausted the smaller dragon was. Picking up a fish, Toothless handed it to Hiccup with a smile.

"Try to get you're strength up," he said sweetly, "I can tell you didn't sleep well last night." Hiccup yawned in response before taking a bite out of the fish. It tasted bland to the young dragon like most of the flavour was sucked out of it. He had trouble eating it, each bite seeming to make his mouth dryer than before, but he was hungry so he ate it anyway. Toothless glanced over and saw the way Hiccup was eating. Slow, difficult bites followed by a painful looking swallow.

"Is everything okay? You feeling alright?" Toothless asked softly. Hiccup looked over and smiled, eating the rest of the fish rather quickly.

"I'm fine, just still pretty exhausted I guess," Hiccup said with a weak expression, "I'm gonna have too much energy tonight. I don't think I'll get to sleep any time soon." Toothless laughed and got up, wrapping his arms around his dragon from behind. He licked his dragon's head affectionately and whispered in his ear.

"I know a way to burn some energy," Toothless said seductively. Hiccup blushed and then turned to his dragon, crossing him paws.

"Is that all you can think about?" Hiccup said teasingly, "Is sex the only thing you care about?" Toothless mimicked Hiccup and crossed his paws together, trying to impersonate Hiccup.

"Hey, I never said anything about sex, that was all you," Toothless said with a smile, "For all you know, I could've suggested something completely innocent like a long flight before bed." Hiccup tilted his head expectingly, obviously not buying the excuse.

"But, in this case I was hinting towards sex," Toothless stuck his tongue out playfully and scratched the back of his head. Hiccup sighed, bring a paw up to his face and slowly dragging it down before pointing a claw towards Toothless convincingly.

"No," Hiccup said before turning away from the dragon and heading towards the door. Toothless gasped a little, acting all surprised and

hurt, chasing after Hiccup.

"But why?" Toothless said, dragging out the 'why.' Hiccup sighed heavily and turned back to face Toothless.

"One, we have class tomorrow, two, we'd have to go to the cove because we both know how loud you are, and because of that, we would probably be late to class...again," Hiccup said, "Anyway, where is Astrid and Snotlout?" Toothless pouted and thought for a moment, puffing up his cheeks slightly to show his annoyance.

"I'm pretty sure Astrid is out training with Iona. The last thing we want is those two becoming friends. Can you imagine the nightmare of having them both in the same place at the same time. I don't know where Snotlout is, and is it bad that I really don't care?" Toothless asked a little too loud with the final few words echoing off the wood. Hiccup laughed a bit and shook his head.

"Not in the slightest," Hiccup said through his laughter. Toothless smiled and moved in closer to his dragon.

"Are you sure there isn't anyway I can change your mind?" Toothless asked sweetly.

\_ "Change\_ my mind?," \_Hiccup thought to himself, "N-no, there isn't." Turning away the smaller dragon pushed his way out of the house, taking in a deep breath of fresh air.

\_ "Why are you still pondering on it?" \_Hiccup thought to himself, \_ "It kept you up all night. Iona said it herself, it's not possible to turn back. Stop worrying about it. Stop debating whether you'd choose your humanity or love. Worrying about something that can never happen isn't going to do you any good. That's right, it can never happen. There isn't a chance for me to ever become human again. I'm a dragon until death. Live with it."\_ Hiccup felt a nudge to his shoulder, dragging him from his thoughts.

"You sure you're okay? You've been staring at the sky for a while now," Toothless said quietly, worry tracing his eyes. Hiccup smiled and nodded, showing he was perfectly fine, just a little tired is all.

"I'm okay, don't worry," Hiccup said as he started to walk with his dragon, "The only thing you should be worried about is what our plans are for today. No class and not much to do."

\_ "Why should you be sad you're stuck as a dragon? You get to be with an amazing guy, something that wasn't possible before. You fell into a love you haven't felt before. Imagine life before him, and you'll see how awful it really was. He's the first good thing to ever happen to you. On top of that, you've made so much progress between humans and dragons and also with the relationships between the tribes. You have a lot to be proud of. Be happy with who you are and don't dwell on the past," \_Hiccup thought to himself.

"Hiccup?" Toothless said loudly, scaring the smaller dragon slightly and causing him let out a small half yell. Hiccup smiled at his companion with guilt and shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm sorry, what were you saying," Hiccup asked hesitantly. Toothless

rolled his eyes playfully and looked at his dragon with love in his eyes.

"You didn't catch any of it?" Toothless asked, getting a solid no from Hiccup who had a blank stare. With a smile, Toothless turned his attention back to the road in front of him.

"We'll figure something out," He said in a cheerful tone. A loud screaming immediately attracts the two dragon's attention towards a house a little ways up the road.

"That timing was perfect," Toothless whispered, running to catch up to Hiccup who was sprinting towards the screams. The two quickly came upon the scene, and burst through the door of the home. Hiccup looked into the house for a moment, not seeing anything from the darkness consuming the home. The dragon then realized his foot was wet with a cold substance. Looking down at the floor, he could make out the unforgettable crimson red of blood coating his paw. The floor was covered with it. Another frantic yell forced Hiccup's eyes back up which adjusted to the darkness better, seeing the young boy from yesterday on the stairs, clutching his head. All around him, all around the home was blood. It was the most brutal sight Hiccup had ever seen. A bloodbath, plain and simple. The victim was an almost unrecognizable lump of flesh that was slashed up very horrifically. Hiccup froze with absolute horror, having quick flashbacks of Dagur's invasion and the horrific sights he saw then, but even those horrors paled in comparison. Feeling his stomach lurch, Hiccup ran outside and emptied his stomach. His whole body shook with the massacre burned into his mind.

Toothless looked in shock, seeing the disgusting scene splattered throughout the small home. He'd seen some horrific stuff back in The Hive, but this was a whole different level. Pulling it together long enough, Toothless ran and grabbed the boy and quickly brought him out of the house and next to Hiccup. A few vikings were outside, wondering what the situation was. Looking over, he saw Hiccup staring at the ground with almost dead eyes, very clearly traumatized. Loud footsteps brought Toothless' gaze upwards, seeing Iona and Astrid quickly coming to the scene.

"What happened?" Iona said, walking towards the door. Toothless moved in front of her quickly, and shook his head.

"It's a bloodbath in there," Toothless whispered out. Iona nodded her head and pushed past the dragon anyway, stepping inside the house and viewing the carnage. She looked almost unphased by the gruesome sight from Toothless' angle. Looking towards Hiccup, Astrid was in front of him, a hand on either shoulder, shaking him slightly. Remembering the small boy that was in front of him, Toothless looked down, seeing that the boy was just as traumatized as Hiccup. Destin was huddled on the ground, rocking himself back and forth with two hands pressed against his ears. Shouting and rapid footsteps caught Toothless' attention once again as the chiefs made their way towards the home. Drawing close to Hiccup, Toothless put his paws around him protectively, watching as Sassa, the Stein chief, quickly went to Destin, trying to make sure he was alright. Stoick was the first to enter the house, who quickly motioned for Calder and Frey to take a look. Toothless could catch the gasps and hushed words flowing from the house. Toothless swung his tail in front of Astrid when he noticed she was drawing closer to the door. He shook his head

quickly.

"Do not go in there," He said sharply, meeting the worried gaze of Astrid who nodded and obediently backed away. At this point, a crowd had begun to grow with whispers resounding from the group.

Hiccup looked down at his paws, at the blood that coated them. It was no longer warm with life, but was cold and sticky. It felt unreal, like a dream, but he knew better than that. Just another day in harsh, brutal reality. His senses slowly came back when he noticed a sudden warmth that surrounded him. Toothless was very close to him, his wings slowly coming around the smaller dragon protectively. He looked over and saw his father and the other chiefs enter the home with gasps and loud whispers. An unexpected touch surprised Hiccup. Astrid had gotten a wet rag from somewhere and was carefully rubbing the blood off of his paws.

"After Dagur, I didn't think it could get any worse. I didn't think I could see anything worse than what he had done," Hiccup whispered out. Astrid slowly dragged the rag across his paws, picking up as much of the blood as she could. She nodded slowly, listening carefully to his subtle words.

"Why is our world like this? Why is it so brutal?" Hiccup asked quietly. Astrid had finished her cleaning and grabbed his paws lightly and comfortingly.

"Brutal vikings create a brutal world. I'm still waiting for a brave and courageous viking to create a happier and brighter world," Astrid said with hope, "but waiting won't do me any good Hiccup. The only way to change the world is by making it change, bit by agonizing bit." Astrid looked into Hiccup's eyes, seeing a thousand emotions playing out in his head. She didn't see the inside, so she could only imagine what he could be going through.

"All those horrible memories must've resurfaced," the young viking thought to herself, watching as the vikings around them whispered amongst themselves. She too found herself thinking of the past and of the sights she saw. Seeing Hiccup accidentally blow apart a viking was certainly a scarring experience. A soft voice attracted Astrid's attention, seeing Sassa try to talk to Destin. He was in a horrible condition. His whole body was shaking, his tears flowed endlessly. From what she heard, he lost his father only a day or two ago, and now to lose his mother. An orphan in a foreign place.

"Destin, tell me what happened sweetie," Sassa said quietly, "Tell auntie Sassa what happened okay?" The Stein chief tried to calm the boy as much as possible, wiping away his tears and rubbing his back. Astrid was caught a little off guard when Destin finally spoke.

"I-I-I-I woke up late a-and I thought mom wanted me to get some rest," Destin started before breaking into a short sob, "I didn't think. T-the house was so quite but I thought she, she was just out. Ah, and I went downstairs." The boy broke down once again and curled into himself, rocking back and forth with tears flowing endlessly. Astrid found it hard to watch the scene and quickly turned her attention back to Hiccup and Toothless. Toothless was rubbing Hiccup's back softly and whispering into his ear comforting words. Looking down, Astrid saw Hiccup looking at his paws again, but this

time, he clenched his claws together and he looked almost normal.

Hiccup's mind raced with many possibilites, wondering which one was the most likely scenario. Looking over, Hiccup stared at the boy for a few moments, contemplating on what he knew from the boy. Destin wasn't average to say the least, not from what Hiccup was confident he saw. The boy definitely had some homicidal tendencies, if not fully present at his young age and he remembered clearly that he saw the boy's eyes almost radiate with a sense of pride when mentioning he killed his own father. Hiccup did not trust the boy in the slightest, even if he was young and seemingly harmless. The dragon couldn't forget the boy's expression and his cold eyes. They resembled Dagur's so much in that brief moment. The sadistic pleasure coursing through the child's veins, but now.

\_ "None of that is present. The kid is a complete trainwreck. Even if he did like killing his father, and even if he played with the thought of killing his mother, there is no way in Odin that he could've managed that much force and brutality," \_Hiccup thought to himself, \_ "So, with that personal theory out of the way, who and why would they kill Val? What did she have to warrant her death?" \_

"Why her?" Hiccup said quietly, "Why her specifically? Was it for a reason, or just a sociopath looking for a release?" Astrid tilted her head at the dragon, thinking over the words he spoke. He broke his long silence for a question that many people must've been thinking, but never spoke.

"Hiccup, we should go home. There isn't anything we can do here," Toothless said soothingly, rubbing his partner's back comfortingly, "We should someone who's more qualified than us take care of it. We can't let every problem on Berk become personal." Hiccup nodded slowly and followed Toothless back towards their home, getting away from the crowd and the murderous atmosphere.

"Let's just go home and cuddle next to the fire," Toothless said soothingly, managing to get a weak smile from Hiccup.

\_ "Even in a momentary peace, something always has to happen," \_the Night Fury thought to himself unhappily, \_ "If it's not Dagur, it's someone else." \_

Iona stared at the scene in front of her with the other chief's. Torches were lit and set around the area, lighting up the gruesome scene. Regrettably, the young chief has seen worse in her days, but still, the sight sickened her to no extent sending waves of nausea throughout her body. She knew this wasn't just a crime, it was a message. Next to Val's cold body was a dagger jammed into the floor next to her, as if mocking them. He's out for blood, whether or not the viking had anything to do with Dagur. The Stein had always an uneasy alliance with the Berserkers. It seems as if that sociopath employed the 'Guilty by Association' scheme.

"Do you think he really has that much influence?" Iona asked, breaking the silence between the five chiefs. The shook their heads at the question, not exactly as an answer, but more as an, 'I don't know.'

"If he does, that implies there is a traitor, or traitors, in our

tribes," Frey said softly. They nodded their heads in agreement, acknowledging the fact.

"We also need to look at the fact it may not have been an incident that's related to him," Stoick said, breaking his silence, "It could've just been a murder with Dagur as a scapegoat. For all we know, we could be dealing with someone who's much smarter than us and is using our aggression and our own knowledge against us." The group once again nodded their heads in an uneasy agreement. Silence once again drifted between the chiefs as they investigated the scene, looking for any possible leads.

"It also raises the question, why Val? She was one of the sweetest and strongest people I know. She never made any enemies and kept to herself mostly," Sassa said quietly, her words spreading easily around the room in the silence. Iona found herself frozen in place, thinking it over. Why was she killed, and furthermore, how could such a brutal murder not attract any attention? No witnesses? No one heard anything?

"Whoever did it, took her by surprise," Iona said, "and they certainly took their time."

"Maybe it was the Berserkers," Calder said suddenly, "For all we know, your whole tribe could still be loyal to him! For all we know, you are the traitor here, a spy for that bastard!" Iona recoiled slightly at the sudden accusation. She quickly stood up, facing the Gunnar chief.

"So I finally get to see your true emotions towards me," She said harshly, "The great Calder the Cold won't trust a viking who hasn't done anything wrong, but will gladly and blindly trusted a talking dragon."

"What are you implying here," Calder yelled.

"Enough!" Stoick yelled, silencing the two, "This isn't the time or the place for your quarrels! Focus on the task at hand!" Calder muttered something to himself and exited the house for some fresh air. Iona looked back towards the broken body of Val, a large pit in her stomach. It wasn't just someone being killed, Iona was used to that. It's the fact that she was killed so brutally and then left as a message. Using people as tools sickened Iona to no end. The door opened slightly, and Sassa slipped through.

"Stoick, the boy has no where to go for the time being. Another ship won't be back from Stein in a few days. We should let him stay at your home for the next few days. Odds are he's going to keep to himself and stay quiet for many months to come," She said quickly. Stoick shrugged his shoulders and nodded.

"If that's what you think is best," He said, taking off his helmet and running a hand through his hair.

"Thank you," Sassa said before backing out of the doorway. Frey watched as Sassa left, and turned to the other chiefs.

"Regardless of whether a traitor did this, we need to set up interrogations," Frey said strongly, "It's our duty as the leaders of our tribes to bring this viking to justice." The remaining three

nodded their heads in agreement.

"Iona and I can take a portion. Calder, you and Frey should take another. I'll have Gobber help with Sassa and her groups," Stoick said sternly, "Any objections?" Being met with no resistance, Stoick nodded his head and left the building, heading out towards the Great Hall.

"Even when he's gone," Iona said to herself quietly, "He still finds a way to haunt our lives."

## 29. Chapter 28

"Come on, I'm here with you. We can tell him," Toothless said enthusiastically. Hiccup shifted uncomfortably next to his companion as they walked along the trail towards Stoick's home. Even from where they were, they could hear the loud shouts from inside the home. Words tossed about and screamed into the foggy morning air. Anger filled the atmosphere and made Hiccup even more uneasy.

"Maybe we should come back, when they aren't arguing," Hiccup said, turning around. Toothless quickly stepped in front of him and looked at him lovingly. The larger dragon looked up at the house not too far away and the loud sounds emanating from it.

"From the sounds of it, they seem to be having a difficult time. Why not some good news to cheer them up?" Toothless said sweetly with a smile on his face. Hiccup found it hard to look at Toothless and focused on his feet instead, watching as they shifted his weight. The young dragon felt a paw on his shoulder. It wasn't firm or commanding, but gentle and soft. Hiccup looked up slowly, looking into his dragon's eyes.

"If you don't want to tell him," Toothless said carefully, "then let me know. I don't want to force you or rush you into anything." Hiccup nodded slowly and looked back down, a little angry with himself that he didn't have the guts to tell his father.

"Hiccup, I can see you're angry with yourself. Don't be, okay? You're not hurting my feelings, you're not hurting our relationship," Toothless said quietly, "Anyway it was wrong of me to force you like this, even after everything that happened yesterday." Hiccup shook his head and looked into Toothless' eyes, a strong glow of determination radiating from his eyes.

"No, I want to tell him," Hiccup said, turning back around, "I want this Toothless, I want this for us." Hiccup took several more steps towards the door with Toothless by his side. The pair stopped when the house suddenly went quiet. It almost seemed as if no one was really home, but the sharp creaking of wood would tell otherwise. A female voice rang out frantically, pushing the others into an uproar. This continued on for several more minutes, leaving the dragons to wait outside, not wanting to interrupt whatever was going on inside. The chiefs burst from the home and ran towards the village, past the two confused and worried dragons. Stoick was the last out and stopped short when he saw his son and his dragon. He composed himself quickly and walked calmly to the dragons. Hiccup's heart sank a little, but he still had the determination to tell him.

"Dad I-"

"Hiccup, Toothless listen," Stoick interrupted, "Destin is missing along with several pages of important documents, Iona's book, and my book of defense strategies has been tampered with and likely copied. We're confident he took them and ran."

"What?" Toothless said, his pupils turning to slits in anger and surprise, "Are you sure it was him?" Stoick nodded his head and walked passed the two, motioning for them to follow.

"He's the only one who could've," Stoick said angrily, "Iona pieced it together when she noticed her book missing and Destin. She said it all made since, a plan to kill his father knowing he'd be sent to Berk. I'm guessing either his mother found out somehow, or killing her was all part of the plan. Kill her and hope that he could get into my home." Hiccup and Toothless followed closely behind the viking as he entered the already mobilized village. Vikings were rushing past the trio with their own destinations. Five tribes working in unison with such fluidity and precision that it almost seemed as if they were always one giant tribe.

"What's going on?" Astrid yelled suddenly from behind Hiccup. The young viking quickly caught up to the trio and fell into place next to Hiccup.

"Destin, that Stein kid, is missing along with many of our important documents," Stoick said loudly, picking up his pace as they neared Gobber's shop. Astrid looked completely dumbfounded, wondering how a child could pull something as difficult as that off.

"He's joking right?" Astrid whispered to Hiccup who swiftly shook his head, jogging a little to catch up to his father. Stoick suddenly stopped and turned to the two dragons and Astrid.

"You two, get to the skies and look for him, he could be anywhere," Stoick said, pointing to the two before redirecting his finger to Astrid, "You and Stormfly get up there as well. I need my best eyes in the sky." With that, the chief walked off to give orders to vikings and find Gobber. The three were left alone with vikings swirling all around them quickly, each with their own mission to carry out. Toothless nudged Hiccup and motioned to the skies.

"I guess it'll have to wait," he said with a hint of despair, "Stoick needs us." Hiccup nodded reluctantly and spread his wings apart, stretching them for flight. A hard punch landed on Hiccup's shoulder, prompting him to look at the source of the sudden pain.

"As soon as I find Stormfly, I'll be with you two," she said with a smile, "Go." With that, the pair took to the skies, quickly scanning through the village before flying into the wilderness of Berk.

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><p>The two had flown for a good few minutes when Toothless spotted a figure on the beach. The fog kept its identity a secret until they came closer. Landing softly and a distance away, the two made out a small boat and watched it with anticipation, listening for any small sounds that may echo through the forest. After a few more minutes of no sound, Toothless slunk down from their hiding

place.<p>

"Toothless," Hiccup whispered worriedly, "be careful!" Toothless flicked his ear in response, noting that he heard the other dragon. The Night Fury slowly drew close to the boat, keeping himself low and hidden in the shadows. Hiccup could hardly see his companion through the fog, only the faint black outline of where he was hiding. After a few moments, Toothless fired a blast at the boat, effectively destroying it and momentarily created a hole in the fog. The sudden ball of fire reverberated around the forest, shaking the ground a little even from where Hiccup was situated. Toothless carefully flew to Hiccup, an indecipherable look on the bigger dragon's face. Hiccup knew Toothless, but this was one of the times where he just couldn't figure the dragon out, and he usually wears his emotions on his sleeve.

"Let's go," he said quietly, "If he's nearby, he either saw or heard that. He might be on the move." Hiccup nodded in agreement and the two took off, flying into the foggy air. The younger dragon had a pit in his stomach, though he couldn't really figure out where it had come from. Maybe he was nervous? It could be the whole situation, or maybe even the idea of telling his father.

"Hiccup," Toothless whispered. Hiccup looked over, seeing those green eyes shine through the fog. The Night Fury was pointing towards the forest with anticipation.

"Do you see it?" he said softly, "There's someone moving down there." Hiccup looked down curiously and searched for the figure. At first he didn't see anything and was about to ask Toothless for more help when he noticed a dark figure sweeping below the trees as if trying to conceal himself from the skies.

"Let's circle back and land near him," Toothless said softly. Hiccup agreed and the two circled for a moment before landing softly where they last saw the figure. Chills ran up the young dragon's spine when heard nothing. The forest was completely still, not a single sound, not a single bird chirping, not a single rodent scurrying about. The trees around them were dead.

"Toothless," he said with an detectable tremble in his voice, "I really don't like this...we should wait for Astrid." The Night Fury ahead shook his head slowly and moved his wing lightly over the smaller dragons mouth. Hiccup was almost about to tell him off when he saw the look in his eyes. That look the hunter gets when he sees his prey. Following his gaze, Hiccup sees a shadowy figure with a large contraption.

\_ "Is that a bola sling?" \_Hiccup thought to himself, \_ "How could he have managed to sneak one of those out? On top of that, get it into the forest. What does he plan on using it for?"\_ The two dragon's slowly sneaked into the cover of the shadows, taking careful steps as to not alert the frantic shadow. At this point, it was very clear it was the small figure of Destin as he tried to work the contraption. Toothless suddenly burst from their hiding place, rushing the small boy with incredible speed. Hiccup's breath caught in his throat seeing his love suddenly thrust himself into danger.

"Thank you," Destin said with a smile, firing off the contraption. As if the world went in slow, Hiccup's heart beat nearly out of his

chest. It was a regular sling being fired out of the sling, it was a bola made up of chains and maces. Hiccup jumped from his hiding place quickly and raced after his dragon. Toothless quickly stopped short and jumped to the side, trying to dodge the flying sling. The Night Fury felt a hot jolt of pain fly through his wing as a spike from one of the mace's found its place in the joint of Toothless' wing. The bola flew through the air, spraying what blood it had picked up over Hiccup as it wrapped itself around a tree.

Hiccup stopped and looked down at himself, a small amount of blood splatter up his chest and down the center of his face. Looking up, he saw Toothless slump in pain and a bad gash in his wing joint. Hiccup gasped and quickly rushed to his companion, examining the wound closely.

"Can you move it?" Hiccup asked quickly, worry filling his voice. Toothless shook his head and looked away from Hiccup and at the bola sling, seeing that Destin had run off.

"Toothless, this is a bad gash, we need to get it treated quickly," Hiccup said, helping Toothless to his feet. Toothless shook his head and moved forward.

"We need to catch him," Toothless said. Hiccup grabbed Toothless' paw and looked into his eyes.

"Just...be careful," Hiccup said quietly, "I don't want to see you get hurt again." Toothless smiled gently and nodded his head.

"Of course," he said sweetly, licking Hiccup's head gently, "We need to go now."

Toothless and Hiccup ran as fast they could considering Toothless' condition. It wasn't too hard to catch up to him, they simply hard to follow the footsteps pressed into the dirt and the sounds of feet rapidly moving ahead of them. After a while though, the footsteps seemed to fade away and finally disappeared altogether along with the footprints in the dirt.

"How could we have lost him?" Toothless whispered angrily.

"I don't know, he couldn't have outran us," Hiccup said, "There's no way."

"He must've taken another route," Toothless said softly, looking at their surroundings, "I think there's a cliff farther up that overlooks the forest. There's no way he'd go up there." As if Destin were waiting for that specific cue, a loud crashing came from ahead of them. The two dragon's stared at eachother for a moment, internally debating whether they should go or wait for help to arrive. Considering the fog only seemed to have intensified, the two highly doubted anyone would be able to find them. Cautiously, the two made their way forward, keeping silent and keeping low. They two came upon an open area, free of trees that served as a platform that looked over the entire foggy forest. At the center of that platform was a small figure waiting for the two. Creeping out from the treeline, the pair kept their wits and looked about them to make sure no traps were already set.

"I feel like you two might be looking for me," Destin said in a

mocking tone, passing back in forth on the cliff side, a large dagger in his hand that was coated with dried blood. Toothless growled slightly, holding himself back from jump pouncing on the kid.

"Why corner yourself up here, no, why even do all of this?" Toothless growled out. Destin smiled as if waiting his whole life for that question to be asked. This 'kid' had such a menacing smile, one that just cut through the fog.

"If you insist," the boy said sharply, "One day not too long ago, Mr. Dagur came to our humble little island to talk business. I snuck out at night and promised him I would steal some important stuff for him. He said I could do whatever I needed too to get them, so I killed his mother and father." The child had a wicked smile, fiddling with the dagger in his hand, cutting into his thumb lightly, but just enough to draw blood. Hiccup could feel that pit in his stomach grow even more so.

"You killed Iona's mother and father?" Hiccup asked, staring at the boy with surprise. Destin looked confused. He seemed to over act every emotion he had, especially when he figured out the question.

"Oh no, no, no," he said in a sadistic voice, "I killed that brat Destin's parents. It was a joy really." Both the dragon's stared at the boy, not really sure what to think of his words. The boy noticed their confusion and stuck a tongue out.

"Aw, are the tough little dragon's all confused," Destin mocked loudly, his words echoing through the forest. Toothless took a step forward, growling menacingly. The boy raised a finger in an 'oops' fashion and began pacing again, keeping an eye on the dragons.

"You see, every has a soul and sometimes they get confused and lost and end up in a body with another soul in one body," Destin said, breaking for a short laugh, "I'm just like that, a poor lost soul who found a host for me to feed upon. I can kill all I want and this little boy is the perfect cover. Not a single memory of what I did. He thinks Ljuga is just the boogieman who haunts his dreams, that little brat." While Destin...or Ljuga, whoever was talking to the two dragons, was off babbling about souls and other ramblings, Toothless lunged for the boy, aiming to swat the dagger away and pin the boy down. The boy quickly stepped out of the way and watched the dragon land and the ground around him give out.

Toothless yelled in surprise, grasping on to any stable land he could. The dragon hung on for dear life as the earth below him was a long way down. He tried to get himself up but the dirt in the cliff face was too damp and kept giving away. Hiccup jumped over and grabbed onto Toothless' paw.

"Hold on! Hold on!" Hiccup yelled, trying to pull Toothless up. It was no use, he was just too heavy for the scrawny dragon.

"Well, would you look at the time," the boy said sarcastically, "I've gotta get going, it was nice meeting you." With that, the boy walked away, content with his job and the suffering he could bring for the time being. He could've just killed both of them right there, or at least one of them, but that boy wanted to keep them alive. He knew the two weren't his to kill, no, that was Dagur's quarry.

"Hiccup! Hiccup! I'm slipping!" Toothless said frantically, scrapping at the soft dirt below him. The two struggled to get him back up, but it was to no avail.

"Try harder Toothless! Push yourself up, I can't do this on my own!" yelled Hiccup in fright, "Please! Push! Push!" Toothless growled loudly trying to pull himself up, hurting his wing in the process, causing the progress they made to be lost as the dragon quickly slumped back over the edge. Hiccup's eyes filled with tears, scared that in a split second, he could lose his whole world. The ground around him started to shift under the weight of the two, scaring Hiccup even more.

"Hiccup, the ground, the ground is giving away," Toothless said quickly. Hiccup tried to think under the pressure, but very few things came to his mind.

"I-I-I-I could let go and catch you and we could glide in-

"Hiccup, I'm too heavy for that, I'd just pull you down," Toothless said quickly. The ground shifted again, moving the damp ground closer to the edge. Hiccup squealed in fright and tried to pull harder on Toothless' paw and arm, getting him up a few more inches.

"Hiccup, if I don't make it," Toothless said with tears filling his eyes, "I love you so much, Hiccup. I'll always be with you." Hiccup pulled even harder, but another shift of the ground forced him down on his stomach at an awkward and horrible angle to pull him up with.

"Don't talk like that! You're going to make it, damnit!" Hiccup yelled, tears flowing down his cheeks.

Like that, the ground between them gave away and Toothless fell.

Hiccup's own life flashed before his eyes. The horror, the guilt, the scares, the emotions, but the laughs, the happiness, the trust, and the love he shared with this dragon. Seeing the absolute horror in his eyes that suddenly changed to an unwilling acceptance, Hiccup watched as his dragon closed his eyes.

"No," Hiccup whispered.

The smaller dragon lunged off the cliff, clinging to Toothless as strongly as he could and flapped his wings harder than he ever had before. Toothless' eyes shot open, seeing Hiccup trying his hardest to save his life. With a sorrowful smile, Toothless tried flapping his one good wing. Their decent slowed enough, but Toothless' single flapping wing force the two into a spiral as they went into the foggy forest below at an angle. Toothless grabbed onto Hiccup and braced for impact, feeling the soft earth hit him.

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><p>He couldn't have been out for more than a few minutes, but to him, the world around him seemed to have shifted completely. Toothless looked around in a daze for Hiccup, trying to find his love in the slowly lifting fog. His eyes came to a shadowy figure laying

on the ground not too far from him. Getting up and regaining his senses, he felt sore all over and his prosthetic was jammed up. Shaking his head lightly, Toothless walked over to Hiccup and nudged him gently. No response.<p>

"Hiccup...Hiccup, wake up," he whispered, "Please, wake up." He started to panic, thinking that something could be seriously wrong. Toothless calmed himself slightly and leaned in to hear for a heartbeat and was relieved when the steady rhythm of the smaller dragon's breathing.

"Just...unconscious," Toothless thought to himself. The Night Fury scanned over the smaller dragon's body, noting a few scrapes here and there until he came to his tail. One of his tailfins had been ripped off.

"Oh Hiccup," Toothless said to himself with sorrow. First he lost a foot, now he lost a tailfin needing another prosthetic. Putting a paw along the smaller dragon's shoulder, Toothless shook the dragon lightly, calling his name.

"He's been unconscious for a while," Toothless thought with panic starting to set in again. He tried to calm his breathing, but the adrenaline from the fall still was circulating through his veins, adding more to each emotion he felt. A voice shouted out through the fog, one that was far off and echoed.

"Hello?" Toothless shouted, wincing a bit from yelling. There was silence, then the voice echoed again, this time closer. Toothless started to think of all the people it could be.

"I don't care if it's that kid," Toothless thought, "but if Dagur is here, or whoever that kid was giving those documents too." The voice rang out again, this time he could make out it was female and that the voice was definitely distressed.

"Astrid! Over here!" Toothless said, firing off a blast into the sky. In doing so, Toothless coughed from the expenditure of energy and quickly sat down. Looking over his shoulder, he looked at Hiccup and his calm expression. Astrid's voice rang out again, this time much closer, nearly on top of them almost. With that, the dragon and the girl faded through the fog into sight.

"Oh my gods!" Astrid said, jumping off of Stormfly, "What happened?" Toothless was quiet for a moment.

"Where were you?" Toothless said, suddenly angry with them. Granted he wasn't even sure why, he knew they would have much difficulty catching up to them and helping with the heavy fog, but, that didn't seem to matter.

"Where were you?" Toothless shouted, a few tears making their way down his cheeks, "We almost died...Hiccup's hurt, I'm hurt..." He trailed off, regretting ever even talking. He clearly wasn't in the condition to be doing much of anything. Stormfly approached the Night Fury and rubbed her muzzle against him.

"Toothless, everything's going to be okay," she whispered, "You're both strong." Toothless nodded his head and got to his feet slowly. Looking over Hiccup's body, he started biting his tongue seeing his

love in such a condition again.

"I failed you again," \_Toothless thought to himself with guilt and sorrow.

"Can you fly him back to the village?" Toothless asked softly, looking towards the Nadder. Stormfly nodded her head and motioned towards Hiccup.

"Get him on my back," she said quietly. Toothless carefully picked Hiccup up and situated him on the Nadder's back, making sure he was safe and secure.

"Please, make sure he's safe," Toothless said quietly. Stormfly nodded her head and slowly, but surely made her way back to the village. Watching as the dragon's figured disappeared into the fog, Toothless felt a soft hand on his shoulder.

"Let's go, we've got a lot of ground to make," she said softly.

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless sat in Stoick's home along with a few others patiently awaiting for Svelta to come down from Hiccup's room. The Night Fury flinched from the sudden contact with his wound. Iona quickly pulled her hand back and applied less pressure to his wound.</p>

"I don't know a lot about Night Fury anatomy," she said softly, "but I think you got lucky with this one. It doesn't look like anything is damaged to badly." Toothless breathed out sharply and looked at his feet.

"I wouldn't call any of his 'lucky,'" he said softly.

There was still no sign of Destin, even with the fog having lifted. The chief's came to a reluctant agreement he must've fled the island by now or hiding somewhere out in the wilderness. Boats patrolled the oceans surrounding the island, but he still might have managed to slip through. Either way, there was little chance to finding him or recovering any of the stolen documents. It was as if the Gods had punched the Night Fury in the face, punishing his love for trying.

"Why did I jump?" Toothless thought to himself with hate, "Why did I have to jump at him?"

The sudden creaking of wood attracted Toothless' attention towards the staircase. The wooden door of his room slowly opened as Svelta descended the stairs, looking over the few people who waited in the room. She walks to the group and takes a seat in front of them.

"He has a minor concussion and a few minor injuries. His left tail fin is missing, but I cleaned the wound and should be okay," Svelta said before pausing, looking towards the Night Fury, "If you weren't there Toothless, he would've died. Hiccup...I think he's slipped into a coma, not like the one he was in before, an actual coma. He's displayed all the signs for it and is showing no response." Toothless' breath caught in his throat and his heart pounded with fear and grief.

"This day in age, we don't have anything we can treat him with," Svelta said quietly, "We can only hope he wakes up. The next few days are touch or go, whether or not he wakes up or dies. He's strong though, maybe not in muscle, but in will. He'll pull through, I just know it." The healer got up from her seat and looked at the few people gathered together for this young dragon. With a slight nod of her head, she exited the home.

Toothless slowly made his way up the stairs, the wood creaking softly as he climbed the last few stairs. The door was open and Toothless could see Hiccup's unconscious form lying on his old bed. He definitely didn't fit on the small thing anymore, but it would have to do for now. Seeing him like this again, seeing him in such a condition because he couldn't protect him, it was all too much for Toothless to bear any longer. The Night Fury slumped over his love's body and silently cried for his love.

Stoick listened for a while, catching the occasionally weeping from Toothless until eventually the room above fell silent. The old chief slowly ascended the stairs and peeked into the room. He could see Toothless watching over his son as a silent guardian. Stoick opened the door with a soft creak, noticing Toothless' ears flicked from the sound.

Toothless could hear the sounds of Stoick's footsteps as they walked towards the bed. He could hear the old chief getting worked up seeing his son, his only son, lying on a bed in such a condition. Stoick went to the side of the bed opposite of Toothless and pulled over a stool and sitting on it. Taking one of his paws, Stoick squeezed it gently, looking at his sleeping boy.

"Stoick," Toothless said softly, noticing when Stoick looked up, "I don't know if he's going to wake up, so I want to let you know." Stoick obviously didn't like hearing his son might not wake up, but he knew in his heart he would have to accept his possibility.

"Let me know what, son?" Stoick said. Toothless's heart trembled hearing Stoick call him son. That was a title he reserved only for Hiccup.

"This morning, Hiccup and I were coming to talk to you," Toothless said in a quiet voice, "We wanted to tell you...that...we wanted to 'get married' as he put it. I wanted him, I want him as my mate, sir." During this whole conversation, Toothless' eyes never left Hiccup. Stoick's heart lept for a few moments hearing the news. He really didn't know how to react, but in the end, he truly felt happy.

"I would have said yes...no I say yes," Stoick said quietly, putting a hand on Toothless' shoulder, "You've made my son the happiest boy in the world...and when he comes out of this, I know you two will be the happiest pair on Berk." Toothless smiled softly and nodded his head, relieved to no end Stoick had accepted it. That smile didn't last long, just seeing Hiccup like this was almost unbearable to believe. Stoick left the room quietly and left the two alone.

A boy and his guardian.

## 30. Chapter 29

\_\*\*I apologize for the delay in chapters. I've returned to school, meaning I have less time to write, but I do have more time to think and get the basics of future chapters down. I have the plot for the rest of the arc planned and half of it summarized. Yes, I'll still be posting chapters, but you'll have to do with only one or two chapters a week. I'm terribly sorry for this, but schooling comes first for me, but the story shall continue. Also, I apologize for the shorter chapter. The next few chapters will be switching between a few viewpoints during the battle, each with varying length. I could have included Astrid's next viewpoint, but that would've made the chapter much, much longer, which I try not to do. Bear with me for now.\*\*

><em>

\_\*\*Thank you\*\*\_

\*\*\_~Akos\_\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>The sun was barely peeking over the horizon when Astrid approached Stoick's home. It had been over a week since Hiccup went under, showing no signs of waking up. The young viking stopped for a moment, feeling the world around her move and swim with life, their existence not being disturbed. It felt as if everything were normal again, well, as normal as life got. The feeling didn't last long. Soon enough, Stoick burst from the home, swinging the door open in frustration and slamming it shut. He was muttering to himself like he usually did when he was angry. She hesitated, wondering if she should still go see Hiccup, or put it off for another time. She did do this once or twice, each time she regretted it, feeling as if he could die at any moment and she chose to stay away. Stoick saw the young girl and beckoned her over quickly.</p>

"You have a moment," Stoick said when Astrid was closer, his face a light red color from anger, "Go talk to that dragon. He hasn't left the room unless it was for food or to use the bathroom. Toothless refuses to leave Hiccup's side and he's starting to lose weight too!" Stoick paced around quickly, trying hard not to yell and keep calm. He took his helmet off and ran his hand through his ginger hair, shaking his head slowly.

"He did this last time too, but Hiccup woke up three days later! I know my son, I know his will is stronger than anyone I know! He will pull through, but having another dragon who's seriously starting to become sick isn't helping!" Stoick said in an angered yet hushed tone. Astrid could see the veins popping from his forehead and the red go throughout his body. She couldn't help but sympathize with him. Sure, she was devastated Hiccup was like this, again. It was unimaginable the first time, but a second time seemed downright impossible, but she had a life to live as well and sitting around moping on it all day wasn't going to help Hiccup get better any sooner. She needed to be strong, for him, and for Berk. They needed her and she needed them.

"I'll get him out, sir," she said confidently with a strong voice. Stoick slowed his pacing and nodded his head in agreement, patting her shoulder before he began to walk off, rubbing the back of his

neck. She knew when no one was looking, he lost it just as much as Toothless did. Astrid smiled gently.

"Sir," Astrid said, getting the chief's attention, "You've changed a lot." She said the words sweetly and sincerely. The chief looked at her with curiosity.

"What do you mean?" he asked strongly, almost seeming as if he were offended by the statement. Astrid's smile grew even wider.

"You really do care for Toothless," she said, "You don't see him as an animal anymore, but as a person...almost like a son." Stoick was a little surprised by her statement and he didn't quite know what to say. He guessed he really did feel that way, what with the news that the two were going to be married, but Toothless only told him and he kept his mouth shut about it.

"He's...." Stoick started, "He's made my son the happiest I've ever seen him. I made so many mistakes in my life, many that almost took my son's life, and some that almost took his best friend's. I don't think there is anything I can do to take back the wrongs I did, but showing that dragon the love he deserves, a family he can call his own, and a place to come home to is a damn good place to start."

Astrid nodded her head gently, pretending like she didn't see the few tears escape his eyes. Stoick turned away and wiped the tears and walked on. His strides became straighter, his steps more confident, his head higher, and his presence much stronger.

"All it takes is a little push," she whispered to herself. Astrid watched as the chief disappeared into the village before turning back towards the house and looking at the window. It was open slightly, but no sound came from the room. She took in a deep breath and walked into the home.

The wood creaked as she slowly opened the door to Hiccup's room. The room was quiet and the air was light. Overall, the room just didn't feel...right. Astrid could see Toothless' form half slumped into the bed with deep breaths moving his body slightly. Next to him, Hiccup was in the bed, his peaceful expression never having changed. He was skinnier, not by much, but he'd lost some weight. It worried Astrid knowing that if he doesn't wake up, he is going to die. She shook the thoughts away quickly and quietly made her way next to Toothless. He was sound asleep, though his expression was troubled. She lightly shook the dragon, getting no response from him. She shook him again, getting an annoyed half-growl from the dragon. Astrid crossed her arms and pushed him a little with her leg, getting an annoyed groan from Toothless.

"I don't wanna get up Stoick," Toothless muttered out in a thick, drowsy voice. Astrid raised a brow at him and kicked his leg, getting a sharp squeak from the dragon who popped up from his position. He looked around quickly, seeing Astrid. The fire in his eyes died quickly and was replaced with that same sullen look he's had. The dragon turned his attention back to Hiccup, resting his head on the bed once again. She noticed Toothless' wing had almost completely healed. Dragons were fantastic like that, being able to heal quickly, and that's what gives Astrid hope for now. Astrid looked at the dragon and sighed softly. On one hand, she definitely could relate to him. Toothless was Hiccup's boyfriend after all, the two love each other. On the other, she needed him to get out of the house and get

stronger, not just for his own sake, but for Hiccup.

"Toothless," she said softly.

"I know what you're going to say," Toothless interrupted, "I'm not leaving his side." Astrid walked over and sat down next to Toothless, in between him and Hiccup. She forced him to look her, make her presence known.

"I'm not asking you to do this for yourself," she said sharply, "Rot in here, that's your own choice, but doing this won't help Hiccup in anyway. Wasting away in this room won't solve anything. Get out, get stronger. I know what you whisper to him when you think no one is listening." Toothless' eyes widened a bit and he looked away ashamed.

"If you honestly want to protect him, then leave this room," she said, the last few words leaving having an impact on Toothless. He looked down at his paws that rested on the bed. They were powerful tools, capable of inflicting massive damage. His body was tough and could take his fair share of hits. His flames were controlled and deadly, already proven to kill, yet none of these weapons could protect Toothless. He wasn't strong enough.

"Be strong for him," Astrid whispered out, seeing the grief and anguish in his eyes. Slowly, but surely, those emotions drained from his eyes and were replaced with hope and strength. The Night Fury took long look at Hiccup. Astrid could see it and she smiled.

"All it takes is a little push," she whispered to herself. Toothless flicked his ear and looked at the girl, but brushed off the mumble of words. He got up and motioned towards the doorway.

"Then let's go, before I change my mind," Toothless said flatly. Astrid nodded her head, giving Hiccup a kiss on the head before they walked towards the exit. Toothless looked over his shoulder one last time before he followed Astrid out of the room.

\* \* \*

><p>The cool air outside brushed against Toothless' skin. He didn't feel much of the chill, just an average breeze blowing by. Astrid on the other hand, put on a fur coat, claiming it was starting to get cold out. Toothless didn't feel it, but he acknowledged humans were as sturdy as dragons were. The pair had walked through half the village, Toothless following Astrid wherever she went. He didn't quite know what to do now, his burst of confidence from earlier and slowly seeped away the longer they were out. Yes he wanted to get stronger, to train, but how? By who?</p>

Astrid stopped and turned left, heading towards the market. A small lump formed in Toothless' throat when he realized where they were going. They would have to pass his home and he hated knowing that it was empty, well, save for Astrid and Snotlout, though he didn't trust Snotlout anywhere near his home.

The smells of the market drifted in the air towards the pair. The familiar scent of fish, bread, and other items made Toothless feel a little queasy. They rounded a final corner, bringing the market into full view along with the dragon's home. Toothless hesitated for a

moment, wondering if he should just turn back and go to Hiccup.

"Keep going," a little voice inside Toothless' mind said, "Keep moving forward." The dragon put one paw in front of the other and followed Astrid. The market quieted down as they walked through the stalls. Toothless caught glimpses of stares being tossed his way. Those eyes of sadness, pity, and despair, he remembered them all too well.

"Why did this happen?" Toothless found himself thinking yet again, "Why him? What did he ever do wrong? He only wanted peace, for everyone to be happy and everything to be okay. How can a person jump out of one coma and into another, huh? It doesn't make any sense! Could it be some spell? Could it just be horrible luck? Could it all be my fault? What if it was a spell? If it is, it has to be Iona. No, no, no. Hiccup would say to trust her." A bump on the nose ripped Toothless from his thoughts. Astrid had stopped in front of him, looking at a stall to her left, one selling necklaces and other accessories. The viking glanced over her shoulder at the sudden bump but brushed it off and smiled.

"It was just an accident...another accident I couldn't prevent, but that's why I'm out here anyway, to make sure it doesn't happen again," Toothless thought to himself.

"Toothless?" Astrid called out from a little ways ahead. She figured he had spaced out again and waved to the dragon from up the road. He walked towards the young viking waiting ahead. For the first time, Toothless noticed the atmosphere of Berk. It was strangely quiet, rather desolate and hushed. He knew the defenses around Berk were tripled, but the villagers seemed to be living in fear, waiting for an attack to happen any day now. The Stein and Gunnar tribes provided a ship or two to aid with Berk's defense. Mignhild couldn't provide a ship but had a few of their best vikings come to the island.

"Daydreaming again I see," Astrid said once Toothless was next to her. A loud ring of a bell blasts throughout the island. The sudden sound made Astrid jump slightly, looking towards the skies. The Bells of War were signalling the approaching attack. Toothless pushed Astrid onto his back and flew onto a home, getting a great vantage point of the docks and the oceans. In the distance were six ships steadily approaching the island. Toothless couldn't tell who they belonged too, but figured they were Dagur's doing.

"But if it is Dagur, where did he get all these ships and men?" Toothless wondered out loud, "There's no way he could manage that in a month." The dragon's voice was laced with deep seeded anger and hatred.

Astrid looked at the ships. She could feel it in her gut. Dagur was coming back to Berk. She'd been training everyday for two months, trying to prove herself worthy of becoming an official viking of Berk. Astrid wanted, no needed, to protect Berk, her family, and her friends. She won't let herself be weak and useless. When Dagur was last here, she remained in the Great Hall while countless vikings died out there. She could've made a difference, she knows she could've. This time, she was going to track Dagur down and skin him alive.

Toothless' heart slowly drained as he thought of Dagur.

"Last time, you almost took everything I had," \_Toothless thought to himself, \_"so I took your arm...this time I'll take much more than that. Oh no, I won't kill you, Hiccup wouldn't approve of that, killing another person. I'll just make you suffer, give you all those horrible memories you gave Berk. I'll show you what it's like on the receiving end. I'm going to track you down, and I will make you suffer until your last breath. Simple, bloody revenge."\_

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless bursts into Stoick's home, seeing Svelta packing up all the necessities. She looks over at the dragon and points up the stairs.</p>

"Get him," Svelta yelled, "Carry him to the hall." Toothless nodded, running up the stairs and into Hiccup's room. He stood over his unconscious companion, trying to find a good place to pick him up from. Hiccup looked so peaceful. Another shout from down the stairs prompted Toothless to gently pick him up and lay the smaller dragon awkwardly over the larger's back. He carefully made his way down the stairs, following Svelta out the door and towards the hall. From the hill, Toothless could see the ships had made quite the distance. Two ships had branched off from the main force, one going to either side of the island while the remaining four would attack the docks.

Toothless went through the grand doorway that was the Great Hall and went towards the center of the room, gently placing Hiccup on the floor, grabbing a pillow from Svelta and placing it under his love's head. Outside, the sounds of destruction had begun to engulf the island of Berk. Toothless looked out the doorway, watching as many more villagers made their way towards the hall. Looking up, the Night Fury could see the newly reorganized Dragon Corps flying towards the docks. He noticed Stormfly, Hookfang, and Meatlug among the dragons, though, they weren't flown by their respective riders, rather by their father or mother. A gray object caught Toothless eye as he saw a boulder fly into the docks from an approaching ship. The game of war had officially begun.

Iona's breathed in the cool air as she ran through the streets, heading towards her destination. All around her, she could hear shouts and the stampeding of feet along with villagers escaping the chaos. Boulders occasionally dropped from the sky, smashing into homes, businesses, and unfortunately, an unlucky soul or two. Suddenly, one smashed down in front of Iona, catching her off guard as she skidded to a halt and fell back. She was a few feet away from certain death. Once the initial shock died, she climbed onto the boulder, using it to booster herself onto a roof. She could see the growing battlefield perfectly. She traced a boulder, seeing it flying towards her right and into the heart of the village. Iona saw the figures of a woman and her two children running towards the hall, the boulder coming straight for them.

"îuî°ï, ï•î-ï^îuî¹," Iona whispered to herself, aiming her hand and gripping her wrist as she said the enchanted words. In a flash of yellow light, symbols formed behind the family, creating a protective circle barrier that stopped the boulder with a audible thud as it

slumped to the ground. She loses her balance for a moment, trying to regain her energy. Having regained her momentum, she hops from one rooftop to another, getting to her location quicker while trying to minimize damage whenever possible. Looking back out to the ocean, she noticed that two ships had broken off from the original formation, heading to either side of the island. Hopping down from the houses, she sprinted towards the intersection, seeing Stoick there as he said he would be.

"Did you see the ships?" She shouted out when within earshot. Stoick turned his head and nodded his head in confirmation.

"I've deployed two battalions for each ship," Stoick said after he finished ordering his men, "The Dragon Corps is already out at sea attacking the ships, weakening them as much as possible before they land." The chief looked out towards the sea, noticing the flags on the ship.

"You noticed the flags too, I presume," Stoick said sharply, cracking his knuckles.

"Langely," Iona said indifferently, "led by Jarl, who, from what I heard, made it very clear the Langely were an enemy of Berk. It doesn't surprise me that Dagur would go to them for help. Hell, he's probably their chief now that manipulative fool." Stoick nodded his head in agreement, seeing the ships draw closer.

"Let's go greet our guests with utmost courtesy," Iona finished, a wicked smile on her face. Stoick was a bit intimidated by the look she was giving, but that only fired him up even more. Stoick had it deeply rooted into his being, the desire to repay Dagur for all he's done. The chief was going to end Dagur's life this time. This time he won't arrive a minute too late. It'll be his troops that arrive too late. He'll make sure his life ends today.

The final battle against Dagur.

### 31. Chapter 30

Astrid's lungs burned as she ran through the forest, keeping pace with the rest of the vikings. She was assigned to the Second Sect, assigned to defending the eastern beaches of Berk from invading forces. She could hear the cracking of leaves and branches under feet as she mildly struggled to keep formation with the more experienced vikings. She remembered back in the days before Toothless and Hiccup, back when she was the best trainee out of the bunch. Now she just seemed like an inexperienced rookie, and granted, she really was. She hardly had a taste of real war, on the front lines.

Ahead of her, she could see Snotlout and his slightly wobbly legs. She was pretty amazed at how far he'd come.

\_ "Not as good, but pretty close to me," \_she thought to herself proudly. Now, to Snotlout's left, a sheepish looking Fishlegs ran with a visible tremble in his strides. She still didn't know how he managed to be let on the force, but she assumed it was his intellect that pulled through. He lost quite a bit of weight over the past month or so, having his muscles shine through the fat. It only seemed like yesterday that they were still trainees cowering in the Great

Hall in fear of what was to come. It seemed like Hiccup and Toothless were the only ones with strength at the time. They had each other, and even though they were both terrified, they were both strong enough to push past it.

In just a few short weeks, the trio rushing towards the eastern beaches managed to prove themselves enough to be put into action, granted put in the least dangerous situations and put in the safest place in the formation. Still, Astrid was determined to prove herself a worthy viking. She was determined to protect her village this time, to protect her friends. She trained too hard these two months, yet, in those two months, she did see Snotlout a lot, but she rarely saw Fishlegs training.

\_ "Then...how did he managed to pull this off...and the weight?"  
\_ Astrid thought to herself, \_ "I swear, if Gobber was giving him specialize training again..." \_

The formation suddenly slowed to a crawl, catching Astrid slightly off guard. Ahead of them, the tree line reseeded, revealing a two docking ships. Many vikings poured out and eyed the tree line with bows ready to fire. One of the older vikings, Mildew, who Astrid personally disliked for his treatment towards Hiccup and the dragons, signalled for the vikings to spread out quietly around the beach. Astrid slowly crawled up next to Snotlout, and quietly pulled out her bow and a few arrows, readying herself for the opportune moment. Enemy vikings were beginning to form ranks and begin their trek inwards. A loud crashing attracted the eyes of many enemy vikings as a barrel fell overboard and smacked into the sand, cracking it open.

Mildew threw his hand up quickly the defending forces popped their heads up from their positions and fired an arrow or two off at the enemy. Astrid flew up, the world around her slowly as she eyed an enemy viking. He turned his head and made eye contact with her. The sudden fear in his eyes. Those were eyes of regret. She felt the arrow fly from the bow and find its mark in between those deep brown eyes of his. His head flew back sickeningly, sending a short spurt of blood over the sand before he fell like a sack of sand. Vikings around her went back down for cover, but she hesitated a moment until an arrow flew past her, grazing her cheek. Snapping out of it, she ducked down as another few arrows went past her head and into the trees above her. Astrid breathed a few heavy breaths, each one slower than the rest as she calmed herself down.

\_ "How can they do this?" \_ Astrid thought to herself\_, "How do people sleep at night knowing they just killed someone?" \_ She looked at her hands, at what they did, what they were capable of. A nudge on the shoulder broke her from her thoughts. Mildew looked at her with a disturbing sympathy she'd never seen from him before.

"The first kill is the one that haunts you the longest," he said softly, squeezing one of her hands, "Just remember what they were going to do to our home, the intent to hurt our friends and our family." He let go of her hand, being received with a quick nod from Astrid, whose eyes shone with regret, but she had the strength to move on. Mildew nodded in return and glanced over at the ships, before jumping up and firing off another arrow and a sharp cry of pain being emitted from the beach. For an old guy, he still had a lot of fight left in him. She took a deep breath and grabbed another

arrow. Before she jumped back up, a cry of pain stopped her. Looking over, she saw Fishlegs with an arrow lodged in his shoulder. Fishlegs pulled the arrow out, digging his finger in his wound to fish the arrow head out for a few grizzly seconds, making Astrid cringe. Shaking her head, she popped back over the edge to fire an arrow but was met with a volley of arrows causing her to duck back down quickly.

\_ "Need to move," \_she thought to herself, crawling sideways closer to Fishlegs and Snotlout. Snotlout looked hardened, almost unmoved by the few men he must've killed. Snotlout popped back up and fired off another arrow, being met with a sickening gurgle of death. He ducked back down and grabbed another arrow, waiting a few moments. Next to him, Fishlegs was skimming through a book.

\_ "Now of all times?" \_Astrid thought to herself angrily, \_"of all the..." \_Then she noticed his wound as gone, just blood stained clothing. Fishlegs closed the book and whispered something to himself. The young viking shouted out a command at the top of his lungs, sweat trailing down his face.

"Ítí•ífí•Í½Í±!" Fishlegs yelled out, his hand held firmly at the invading forces. In a fraction of a second, Astrid swore she saw millions of stars enclose around the boy's hand before hurricane force winds blew from his hands, sending the ships off shore and into the oceans. The vikings who were left on the beach were thrown hundreds of feet into the boats with sickening thuds or out into the ocean with grand splashes. Fishlegs fell backwards onto his back, breathing heavily. He wiped the sweat from his face and sat up, shaking his hand lightly. Berk vikings fired off arrows at the few remaining men who managed to hold on, and firing into the ocean at the ones who survived.

Astrid stared with surprise at the viking.

\_ "I didn't expect that...at all," \_she thought to herself.

\* \* \*

><p>Toothless' heart pounded as he heard the faint sounds of war echoing from the village. It brought back many memories, most of which he'd rather not remember. The floor in front of him still had a faint red tint. The first man Hiccup had ever killed, and hopefully his last. Toothless struggled to stay calm. On one hand, Hiccup was here with the villagers where he could be hurt if left alone. On the other, he knew Dagur was out there, looking for the two Night Furies. Glancing back at Hiccup, Svelta cared to him to her best ability with a few young and curious eyes watching the dragon as he lay unconscious. A boy, probably about seven or eight, poked at Hiccup's tail before going to his mother.</p>

"Mommy, why won't the dragon wake up?" he asked innocently. The mother looked at her boy with a soft smile, and a tinge of sadness lacing her eyes.

"He's just sleeping for a while, Hakon," she said sweetly, trying to keep as quiet as possible. She glanced towards Toothless and saw his slight gaze. The woman looked away quickly, almost seeming ashamed.

"I should be the one feeling ashamed," Toothless whispered to himself, looking back towards the door. Just like last time, he vowed to protect Hiccup and he broke that vow, not being strong enough to keep him from harm. Toothless clenched his teeth together in frustration in himself.

"Such a disappointment," he thought to himself, "you can't even keep him safe. What happened to all those times you did keep him safe? From the Red Death? Any other times that followed? What makes these any different?" Toothless looked back at Hiccup once again, pondering these thoughts for what seemed like an eternity. A loud crashing sound coming from the center of the village attracted Toothless' attention back to the door.

"Whatever happens," Toothless thought to himself, "I'll protect you this time, no matter what."

"Toothless?" a familiar voice said. The dragon turned to his left, seeing Johan standing there with a raised brow.

"Yes? What?" he said quickly, wondering if he missed something. Johan smiled and shook his head lightly, patting the dragon on the back.

"Stay focused," Johan said quickly, turning back towards the door. He was assigned to the Great Hall, keeping the villagers safe along with five other capable vikings. He'd also been promoted in the last month, making his way up the ranks, proving his worth as a viking.

A subtle sound, almost like an approaching roar slowly descended upon the hall. The door burst open and a viking yelled into the hall, his voice echoing off the walls.

"Vikings! To the west!" he yelled, before closing the door. The roaring intensified and a clashing of blades was heard outside. Johan rushed to the door, pulling it open.

"About ten are heading this way, the rest are going into the village!" He yelled, closing the door and barricading it. Johan rushed back to Toothless' side, pulling a sword from his side.

"Stand ready!" he yelled. A few moments of silence followed the yell, the sounds of clashing swords coming to a halt. There was a push at the door, followed by numerous bangs, each passing slam into the door cracking the barricade. Silence once again fell before the door exploded open. A group of ten vikings stood in the doorway, throwing the ram to the side.

"Take the unconscious one," one viking said quickly, "Kill everyone else...but leave the other dragon alive." The group spread out quickly, charging towards the five defending vikings and one lone Night Fury. Toothless fired off two blasts at the vikings, only managing to get one of them. Within moments, he was swarmed by three vikings. His head was smacked with a hammer and then slammed into the ground. He fired off another blast, blowing the man in front of him in half, blood painting the ground in front of him. He turned to get another shot off but was met with pain and sudden darkness.

\* \* \*

><p>He didn't know how long he was out, but it couldn't have more than a minute or so. Toothless shook his head slightly, cringing at the pain he got. Around him, invading vikings lay dead or dying. Toothless looked at the remaining Berk vikings, noting they had lost two or three, with the others being hurt. Johan pulled a sword from one of the vikings and ran to Toothless.</p>

"They took Hiccup!" he yelled, pulling Toothless to his feet. The dragon's eyes widened, looking back at where Hiccup used to be. Svelta was grabbing her shoulder where a nasty wound had been made. Her eyes screamed with regret, pain, and anguish. Toothless rushed towards the door, looking out into the village. Movement caught his eye, seeing a Night Fury tail disappear into the village. Toothless took off into the skies, and headed towards where he last saw Hiccup. Arrows flew past Toothless forcing him to land.

"Shit! Shit! Shit!" Toothless whispered to himself. He hit the ground hard, and stumbled getting up. The air around him was thick and humid and the sounds of war ringed in his ears. He quickly regained his footing and shot off down the street, curving around corners. He was hoping they had gone down this path, and his hope was rewarded when he caught another glimpse of a tail curving around a corner. His heart flared as he pushed himself faster, quickly catching up to the vikings who had taken him. He was so close, but they were just out of reach. He couldn't risk sending a blast towards them on the chance he could hurt Hiccup. The vikings turned a corner and disappeared from view. A booming voice came from where the vikings disappeared. In a few moments, Toothless turned the corner, seeing Stoick and Iona standing in the way of the vikings. A boulder crashed down between the two parties, creating a momentary diversion. The vikings turned around and were met with an aggressive and furious Night Fury. They put Hiccup down without care for his wellbeing and pulled out weapons.

"He said not to kill him, but we can cut him up real good right?" one of them said with a rough, gravelly voice. Three vikings against one Night Fury. Toothless liked those odds.

\_\*\*SSMTHP\*\*\_

And one went down, an arrow lodged in his neck. The other two quickly followed, falling to the ground like limp ragdolls. Stoick and Iona made their way over the boulder to see the three dead vikings and the eastern division heading back into the village. The division was mostly intact, with a few injured soldiers. The eastern front was a success.

"Mildew, take your men to the western shores immediately! They're pinned down!" Stoick shouted out. Mildew nodded in response and ordered his men westward.

"You three stay!" Stoick shouted to Astrid, Snotlout, and Fishlegs, "You three have seen enough, you're heading to the Great Hall." Stoick then turned his attention to Toothless who was holding Hiccup, trying to keep him comfortable.

"What happened! How could you let this happen!" Stoick yelled angrily, making Toothless jump slightly. The chief's eyes were filled with anger and confusion.

"They swarmed the Hall! I tried to keep him safe Stoick!" Toothless yelled in defense. Stoick shook his head, running a hand down his face in anguish.

"I trusted you one too many times! You are incapable of keeping my boy safe!" Stoick yelled angrily, raising a fist menacingly towards the dragon. Toothless recoiled slightly, expecting a blow to come.

"You don't think I know that? I hate myself every day for all the times I failed to keep him safe!" Toothless yelled, more out of frustration with himself than anger for Stoick. The chief looked as if he was about to blow when Astrid stepped inbetween the two.

"Stop!" she yelled, trying to protect Toothless and Hiccup. Stoick pushed past her and continued towards Toothless. Iona stepped in his way, making the chief stop short.

"This is none of your concern, Berserker!" he yelled angrily, moving past her. Iona just positioned herself back in front of the chief.

"I'm making it my concern!" Iona said, using her body as a shield for the two dragons. Toothless laid Hiccup down gently and put a paw on Iona's shoulder.

"I'll handle this," he said calmly. Iona looked worried but nodded and moved away. The two stared at each other. Standing on his tail, Toothless stood eye to eye with Stoick. Astrid and the rest looked on with fear of what was to come. Surely the two wouldn't start fighting amidst a waging war? Toothless was the first to speak, breaking through the tension with his words.

"Do what you think you have to do," Toothless said softly. With that, the dragon closed his eyes and braced for the pain that was to come. There was a few short seconds, then a strong hand as on his shoulder. Opening his eyes, Stoick had a disappointed look in his eyes.

"Thats not who I am anymore," Stoick said softly, "Don't ever think I'd hurt you or Hiccup." Toothless looked into Stoick's eyes, mildly surprised by the statement, but grateful nonetheless. Stoick looked towards the docks and heard the growing sounds of war.

"My time is up, I've got to go," Stoick said, "Stay safe, keep out of trouble, and look out for eachother." Stoick bounded down the street, turning a corner sharply and heading towards the docks, leaving the group to fend for themselves. Toothless cradled Hiccup in his paws, looking at the smaller dragon's sweet face. He looked so peaceful, so content, but with every passing moment, he wished that innocence would disappear and Hiccup would open his eyes. Astrid bent down next to Toothless, rubbing some dirt off of Hiccup's cheek.

"Looks like Iona has been training Fishlegs," Astrid said under her breath. Toothless glanced at Fishlegs who was talking to Iona who seemed to be giving him a stern talk. He really didn't care what the two were saying, he just wanted to get Hiccup back to the Hall.

"Put him on my back, and I'll carry him to the Hall," Toothless said

quietly. The two vikings nodded and carefully placed Hiccup on the larger dragon's back.

"He's lost weight," Astrid thought to herself, worried about the condition of his friend. He still had some fat and muscle on him, but it still worried her to no end. For her, the hardest thing wasn't an immediate loss of someone, its seeing them slowly dying right in front of her eyes. She just hopes that isn't the case.

Toothless didn't pay much attention to the group and started heading back towards the Hall, just wanting Hiccup to be out of harms way. It took a moment for the group to realize Toothless was gone, but quickly caught back up to him. They passed through the market, seeing the destruction that hit a few houses. A few boulders had crashed into the homes of unlucky villagers, crushing the houses. Scanning through the houses, Toothless saw their home was unharmed, still standing tall. He didn't quite know what to do if they lost their home. The pair hadn't lived there long, but they still had many memories there. It was a place they could call their own, a place to build a life.

"Don't forget the future we're going to have," Toothless whispered to Hiccup, "Just remember the promise you made." A scraping sound attracted Toothless' attention to the corner near their home. Rounding the corner, another viking with an axe scraping against the ground.

"Another one got through?" Toothless said annoyed, watching as the viking came closer. The dragon's heart dropped. He didn't need to see the viking completely to realize who it was. The air around them just...died. Such a hollow feeling inside and out.

"Well, well, well," a sadistic voice rang out, "It must be my lucky day!"

## 32. Chapter 31

A hot feeling seeped slowly into Toothless' stomach. A feeling of absolute rage and hatred was draining away his rational thought. All he could see was a Berserker who deserved a fate worse than anything he could possibly imagine. Dagur slowly strolled out from the shadows, a wicked smile carved upon his face. A bright gleam caught the dragon's eye, seeing a dark metallic arm replacing the one he originally blew off. It didn't even look knew. The arm was coated with scrapes, dents, and what looked like dried blood. Dagur noticed the dragon's extended stare and flexed the arm a bit, letting the metal coils and springs move around.

"You like it?" he said sarcastically, "How about I return the favor and take one of yours?" Toothless growled sharply, his muscles tensing and his teeth gritting together. Dagur took another step towards the group and was met with a loud roar from Toothless. The dragon's heart was consumed with hatred as he fired a plasma blast at the psychotic viking. Dagur simply side stepped the blast. Seeing this only aggravated Toothless even more as he fired off several more. The former Berserker could easily guess the blasts trajectory and side stepped most of them. On the last blast fired, Dagur simply held up his arm and hit it away, sending the ball of plasma flying into a house, destroying it with a booming explosion. The shock wave

shook the ground, causing some of the group to lose their footing.

A thump and a lack of weight brought Toothless to his wits. Looking to his side, he saw Hiccup lying on the ground, completely unprotected. The dragon quickly jumped in front of him defensively, standing over his body aggressively. Dagur saw the display and chuckled to himself.

"Is he still out cold?" Dagur asked demeaningly, "I heard the little tyke was in a coma and I thought, 'Ya know what Dagur, I bet Hiccup could use a visit from his good 'ol pal!' I could just stroll right in, kill everyone, and take the little bitch with me! Man, just imagine! What if he woke up with everyone he knows and loves dead, and to top it off, I'm staring him right in his face! Oh how I want to see the stupid look on his face. Just think, I could make him my own personal dragon! I would break him down bit by bit. Oh, I bet his ass is tight, I'd make him my bitch so quickly." Toothless stared in shock and pure hatred hearing those demented and disgusting words come from the bastard's mouth. He breathed in a massive breath, readying himself for a massive plasma blast when Iona steps in front of him. Toothless debated whether or not to fire anyway, definitely killing Iona and hitting Dagur causing indescribable damage. He decided against it when his conscious shone through at the last moment, remembering Hiccup. Dagur raised a brow curiously at his sister.

"A little birdy told me you were here too, so I thought, 'Why not hit two birds with one stone?'" Dagur said gleefully. Iona stared intently at her brother, taking a few steps closer until they were a fair distance apart. Her eyes were void of emotion as she watched her brother pop a few bones and sling his axe over his shoulder.

"Foolish brother," she whispered to herself.

"Iona," Toothless started. He cut himself off when a glare was shot his way by Iona. The emptiness of her eyes legitimately intimidated him, as if she was throwing away her morals and conscious. Iona looked down at Hiccup and sighed softly to herself. She turned back towards Dagur who was leaning on his axe in boredom.

"So are we gonna fight or what?" Dagur asked with a tinge of anger lacing his voice. Iona brought up her hand and snaps her fingers.

"ÎžÏ...Ï€Ï%Ï@ÏfÏ„Îµ," she said softly. Toothless caught the spell, wondering what her intentions were. Certainly it wasn't a spell to kill him, they both knew he deserved a far worse death. A loud fit of coughing and spasming brought Toothless' attention beneath him, where Hiccup's eyes were wide open in shock and confusion. The young dragon curled into himself, trying to catch his breath as if every intake was going to be his last. Toothless stared in shock, realizing what the spell really was. He looked back up at Iona, not knowing what to feel.

"Why didn't you do this earlier?" Toothless nearly yelled with a voice thick with anger. The Berserker chief didn't spare him a glance and got herself into an offensive position as she intended to attack Dagur. The former Berserker stared on, hearing the coughing fit, though never taking his eyes off his sister.

"Looks like he woke up just in time to see me kill all of you," he said in a monotone voice. Toothless looked down at Hiccup, backing off to let Hiccup get to his feet. When he did manage to stand, he was quickly pulled into a tight embrace by Toothless causing him to let out a short squeak of surprise.

"I'm so happy you're okay," Toothless said softly into his love's ears. Hiccup looked around confused and dazed, still trying to figure out what was happening.

"You were out for over a week," Astrid chimed in, "and during that time, Dagur invaded...again...and he's standing right over there." Hiccup's eyes looked over and caught the horrid sight of Dagur. He was leaning on his axe at this point, waiting for something to happen. He didn't dare move towards the on account of Iona.

"I didn't mean you any harm," Iona suddenly said softly towards Hiccup and the group, "When you came back to the village unconscious, your mental and physical stability was low enough to cast a spell of sleep. I planned on Dagur hearing you were out and would show himself." Toothless growled menacingly at the Berserker chief, enraged by the absence of emotion felt towards putting her 'friend's' life in danger.

"You could have killed him!" Toothless yelled loudly and angrily, his voice reverberating off of the houses that lined the streets and flooded into the air. Iona glanced back at the dragon, noting his anger, but ignoring his comment overall.

\_ "Does she really not care?" \_Astrid thought to herself, seeing the whole scene play out in front of her eyes. Iona's eyes starting changing in front of Toothless' and Hiccup's eyes. No longer was there an absence of emotion, but rather an overwhelming amount of one in particular.

An emotion of pure delight

"I just want to see this fool die," Iona said with a slight giggle and a sadistic smile etched onto her face. Hiccup felt his heart drop. All he could focus on was the overwhelming presence of Dagur in her eyes, in those devilish eyes.

"This can't be the same girl," Hiccup said softly, "You spent all this time, trying to be the opposite of him..." Iona looked at Hiccup, her eyes softening before returning to their hardened look.

"I guess no matter how hard I try, I'm just like him," Iona said, turning back towards Dagur, "Oh, and stay out of my way, or else you might die, and no, that wasn't a threat." She popped her knuckles slowly and rushed towards her defenseless brother. Dagur flipped the axe, readying himself in a defensive position as his sister ran towards him.

"It's about time!" he yells, swinging his axe towards Iona. He cuts downward, narrowly missing Iona. She dodged to the side, hearing the loud cracking of the axe as it crashed into the cobblestone pavement. Noticing the slight hesitation in Dagur's movement, Iona kicked the axe away, sending it flying across the street. Dagur countered with a

large kick, missing it's target as it flew over Iona's head. Iona dropped low and sweeped a leg across to trip her brother. Noticing her move, Dagur jumped off of his one leg, flipping to bring it back down into her head. Iona moved her hands defensively above her head, letting the kick slam down on her blocked position. Pushing up against the attack, she was able to push Dagur off balance and send him onto his back. As soon as he landed, Dagur was back on his feet. Iona took this opportunity to send a volley of punches his direction, many of them finding their marks along her brother's form.

The group of five looked on with heavy and tension filled hearts. On one hand, they were amazed by Iona's fighting capabilities, on the other, she was fighting Dagur, and it was definitely to the death. Only one was going to walk out of it. Toothless thought about interfering, but quickly remembered what Iona had said before, and considering how badly things had gone before when he last fought Dagur, he knew that fight wouldn't be one he could walk away from. Through these thoughts, her skill made its presence known. She easily evaded her younger brother's attacks. Weaving and dodging, blow after blow, Iona almost seemed bored. With her capabilities, Hiccup wondered how she ever was captured back on the Berserker island.

After what seemed like an eternity of being punched and kicked, Dagur managed to connect a punch with Iona's face, sending his fist straight into her cheek. Her head barely moved from the impact, as if Dagur had punched a bag of rocks. Tough, hard, and painful. He quickly pulled his hand back.

"Maybe I should my metal arm instead," he said as if he were figuring out a complex math problem. Iona tilted her head a bit and rubbed her cheek like it was sore. The Berserker chief brought her right arm back quickly as she uttered a few words into the air.

"Í'í€ï€í°í•í...í†íµü, í ïçí»íµí½í°í®: í~íçí• ífíti...í•í°, " she said confidently. Almost instantaneously, her hand was surrounding by a green glowing mist. It sparkled and crackled like fire yet provided no sound nor heat. She quickly threw her fist forward, letting it hit Dagur square in the stomach. Dagur was thrown back a few feet, landing to the ground with a loud fit of coughing and gasps for air. Iona flicked her hand to regain the feeling in her hand as her younger brother coughed up a bit of blood. The younger sibling quickly got up after this, wiping the blood trailing down his mouth. He smiled with a delight that sent shivers down Hiccup's spine.

"Should I start getting serious now?" he said mockingly. Dagur charged at her, faster than before. He swung quicker, precisely, fiercely, and strongly. The two siblings went at it, throwing punches at each other with such speed. At this point, the two seemed evenly matched as they pushed their bodies to their limits.

Hiccup snapped out of his thoughts and looked back towards Snotlout. As he expected, the young viking had a confused and scared look on his face.

"Snotlout," Hiccup said softly. He had tried to say it louder, but it still came out quiet and subdued. Even through the fighting, Snotlout managed to caught the whisper, even if he didn't quite know who said

it.

"Snotlout," Hiccup said again, this time with a more pronounced voice. Snotlout looked over at his weakened cousin and went by his side. Hiccup motioned him in closer, looking towards the two fighting vikings trading blow after blow.

"Go find my dad," Hiccup said quickly, yet softly, "Just tell him he's here." Snotlout glanced up at the vikings and nodded his head. Hiccup noticed a relieved look in his eyes before the young viking ran off into the village towards the docks. In just a few short seconds, Snotlout had sprinted out of the situation and into another.

Hiccup struggled to get up, leaning on Toothless as he slowly raised to his feet.

"Don't push yourself," Toothless said worriedly. Hiccup smiled softly and nodded, looking away from his love and towards the two vikings. Iona and Dagur didn't seem to be tiring anytime soon, as if they had a pool of energy they were barely scratching the surface of

"We need to get back to the Hall," Astrid said, motioning towards an alleyway heading out of the village. Fishlegs second the motion, trembling slightly.

Iona landed a good punch to Dagur's face, sending him stumbling backwards. Not letting up, she charged forward, landing a solid kick to his jaw sending him to the ground momentarily. Dagur hit the ground with a hard thud on his metallic arm. A slight cracking sound brought his immediate attention to his prosthetic, noticing a spring had split in two, weakening the integrity of the arm and heavily restricted its movement. Looking to his left, he saw his axe and took the chance he had to end the fight. With what little mobility he had, he reached for the axe, managing to grasp onto it and hurl it towards the approaching Iona. The young chief simple moved her head, letting the axe fly past her.

Out of the corner of his eye, Toothless saw a sudden flash as light reflected off the metal axe. It's trajectory was aimed directly at Hiccup who was completely unaware of the approaching danger. Not getting much time to think, Toothless pushed Hiccup to the ground, out of harms way as the axe flew over the smaller dragons head...and into Toothless' chest.

Toothless looked down, seeing the axe stuck in his chest. Hiccup looked up in absolute horror, seeing blood slowly trickling down the steel. The Night Fury coughed up blood and collapsed to the ground, breathing shallow breaths as death slowly crept over him. Hiccup let out a scream of terror, rushing to Toothless' side.

Iona stopped where she was, quickly turning back to see who let out that terrible scream. She saw the axe, the blood, and the dying dragon. Her heart dropped, realizing the mistake she made by dodging the axe, and it could cost someone their life.

"Iona, help! Do something!" Astrid yelled through the yelling and confusion. Iona looked at the girl and back towards Dagur. The former Berserker was slinking around a corner, making his escape. Iona looked back at the dying dragon, the blood, the tears streaming down

Hiccup's face. Then she ran.

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><p>Astrid watched as Iona disappeared around the corner, chasing after the psychotic Dagur. Her breath caught as she looked down at Toothless, blood swelling in his mouth and spilling onto the ground. He struggled to breath as he stared off into the distance, watching blurred lines seep through his vision.</p>

"Move Hiccup! Out of the way!" Fishlegs yelled, pushing Hiccup away. With his book of spells open on the ground next to him, Fishlegs pulled the axe out in one great heave. Toothless' eyes widened in pain as more blood spilled from his mouth and onto the cold ground. Hiccup yelled even more, holding onto Toothless' head, never wanting to let him go. Fishlegs put a hand up to Toothless' wound, feeling the warm liquid seep from it and coat his hand.

"Í·í€í€Í·í·í...í+íµí, í Í;Í»íµí%í·í®: íµí€í;í·í»í%ífí. í„í·í, Eir," Fishlegs chanted. A light blue mist quickly formed around his hand and flowed into Toothless' wound. With a sulphuric smell, the wound slowly healed itself producing a steam that drifted into the air. The blood around Toothless slowly pulled itself back into the dragon, purifying itself as it went along. Within a few seconds, the wound had finished healing and most of the blood lost was returned to the dragon's body. A deep gasp for air scared Hiccup, but he didn't let go of his love. Toothless let his head rest against Hiccup who was holding him tight.

"Don't...you...ever...do that again, bud," Hiccup said through stifled crying. Toothless slowly rose to his feet, looking deeply into Hiccup's eyes, pulling him into a deep hug.

"Now you know how I feel whenever I see you get hurt," Toothless whispered into Hiccup's ear. The two shared the moment in each other's embrace, neither one wanting let go. Astrid suddenly wrapped her arms around the two of them, wiping away a tear that had made its way down her cheek. She smiled at the two, hugging them tightly.

"You know, we have the worst of luck," she said with a bit of a laugh. The other two joined int mildly, realizing just how true it was. Toothless looked at her and smiled a genuine smile.

"We're vikings, its an occupational hazard," The Night Fury said softly. Hiccup smiled, remembering when his father first told him that so long ago. Toothless stopped smiling and turned around, facing Fishlegs who was catching his breath. The dragon walked over to him and stood face to face with him. Fishlegs looked a bit apprehensive, not quite sure what to do. Quickly, Toothless hugged him. The young viking hesitated but hugged him back. Another set of paws wrapped around him as Hiccup joined in, and soon enough, so did Astrid.

"Thank you so much Fishlegs," Hiccup said softly, "I don't know what we'd do without you." Fishlegs offered a nervous smile and slowly pushed everyone off of him, not really wanting all the attention on him, but they resisted a bit just to mess with him. Even during war, the group finds a way to be happy.

A loud explosion spread everyone out of the hug. Everyone looks where Iona disappeared, seeing rubble fly down the street. A few moments later, Dagur's body hits the ground. The viking quickly rolled and dodged an explosive blast, sending debris everywhere. He got up and made eye contact with the group. He smiled wickedly as he charged towards them. Hiccup tried to muster up some strength to be able to fire off a blast. In a few short seconds, he managed to muster up enough fire to send out a plasma blast. Dagur easily dodged it and moved closer and closer by the second. Toothless reared up and charged towards the viking.

A sudden blast of energy landed between the two, nearly hitting Toothless. The two quickly looked for its source, seeing Iona walking angrily towards the two of them.

"Stay out of this, dragon!" she yelled angrily, her voice splitting the air with such intensity. It was strange hearing such a horrifying sound come from her, the way it slid out of her mouth just wasn't natural for her. Dagur scowled at his sister, walking towards with anger printed across his face.

"Since when have you been so handy with magic?" Dagur asked with a rough and disgusted voice. Iona smiled at his disgust, flexing her hand in preparation for another spell.

"The day I realized you were heading down a darker path," she said in a soft yet sharp voice that cut the wind as it passed. Dagur's scowl slowly turned into a grin as he rushed towards his sister. Iona thrusted her fist out, aiming for a solid punch to his jaw. Dagur ducked down under the blast, feeling the heavy ripples of the blast push past his head. He reached down low quickly and pulled out a dagger. In an instant, the knife was plunged deep into Iona's abdomen.

The world around Iona blurred as heavy pain pierced through her. She could feel a warm liquid move its way into the mouth. Another gust of pain hit her body as the steel dagger plunged within her was pulled out. She fell to her knees, grasping the wound as blood flowed through her shirt and onto her hands. Dagur looked down at her, smiling victoriously as she slowly rocked back and forth in effort to maintain her balance and keep conscious.

"Well, well, sister," Dagur said, admiring the blood-stained blade of his, "you're not the only one with tricks up their sleeve." Looking up slightly, she could see Toothless running towards Dagur, his teeth bared and ready to bite into him. She smiled when the dragon when Dagur glanced back. A book slid next to Iona, one that came from the direction of the group. Fishlegs looked at her with scared eyes. It was almost as if she was looking at herself that day...when Dagur killed her father...and she was too scared to move.

"Tricks..huh," Iona whispered to herself as she skimmed over the page. She raised her hand up when she noticed Dagur's momentary distraction.

"Í'í€ïŒí°í•í...í†íµü, í ï¿í»íµí½í¹í°í®: í~íµí-í± ífí€í»í¹í„," Iona said softly, putting as much strength as she could muster into this close ranged blow. In an instant, the young viking chief was showered with blood as Dagur's body exploded into two separate pieces. The blood

felt warm and sticky in the colder weather, and made her queasy knowing this much carnage was her fault. She finally regained some of her conscious.

Iona struggled to get up, feeling her legs growing numb and her wound causing her less and less pain as she pushed on towards Dagur's upper half. There, the viking gasped for air as blood poured out. His entrails were skewed out on the pavement, yet he still struggled to live. He struggled against death as tears of raw pain rolled down his cheeks. This was his end. Iona looked down at her brother and his slowly dying light and frowned.

"There was a time in my life when I loved you, my foolish brother."

She raised her hand, and with the last of her strength, she uttered one last spell. In an instant, Dagur's head was splattered onto the pavement. A mixture of blood, entrails and other bodily fluids painted the streets.

The world quickly faded to black around Iona as she fell to the ground.

### 33. Chapter 32 - ARC ONE ENDING

Hiccup felt the cool wind brush against his face when he opened the window to his room. He put his paws on the window sill and stared out at the ocean and towards the docks. The town was still a little messy from the battle, but repairs were getting done fast. Hiccup looked down at his paws, noticing the build up of muscle and fat, letting out a sigh of relief. It wasn't as much as he used to have, but enough to help him carry on normally, he just needed a little bit of time.

It's been a week or so since the Langely's failed invasion of Berk. Langely retreated once news of Dagur's death reached their lines that day. They panicked and fell in disarray, which seemed weird at first, until they realized that their chief wasn't on Berk at all. Stoick had returned from an impromptu summit where the tribes discussed the Langely's sudden attack on Berk. It turns out Dagur had strolled into the Langely village, killed their chief and placed himself as their new leader. When a few vikings attempted to stop him, he gutted them alive, then placed their heads on sticks for all to see. Even though they could've rallied together and forced Dagur out, they instead went through the submissive route, hoping they didn't get themselves killed. Either way, the Langely were ordered to repay Berk for the damage done plus compensation, leaving the tribe next to broke from the failed invasion.

Hiccup breathed out a heavy breath, feeling the cool air sweep in and out of his lungs. He was glad to be back home with Toothless. He definitely missed this view; the sea shimmering as the sun set in the horizon was a sight few could hate. Down below, movement caught his eyes as he saw Berserkers loading up a boat and heading back home. He searched around until he caught Iona heading up the boat with an axe slung over her shoulder. Hiccup noticed how she walked taller, with more pride, as if a large burden had been lifted off her shoulders. Hiccup remembered Toothless saying a day or two ago how she didn't like she was hiding anything, like she was genuinely happy.

A few moments after Iona had been stabbed, Fishlegs rushed to her side. While he did his best, Fishlegs was low on energy and didn't have the strength to completely finish the task. He did manage to stop the bleeding and heal her vital organs and tissue leaving minor tissue to heal. She would've preferred to use magic to heal herself, but her healer Brenna took away her spell book and barred her from using magic until she was fully healed.

Hiccup watched on as she boarded the boat. The wind pushed through her hair, making her beauty magnify. She really was a goddess in disguise.

\_ "Yet, Toothless will probably never trust her again," \_ Hiccup thought to himself, \_ "Yes, she could've told him, told everyone what her plan was. It did result in Dagur being brought down, and I'm still alive. I know she had everyone's best intentions in mind." \_ Hiccup noticed Iona turn towards the village, looking over it one good time before she left. The dragon's and the viking chief's eyes locked, seeing it each other from a distance. Hiccup put a paw up hesitantly and waved slightly. A happy smile spread across Iona's face, seeing the kind gesture from a person she hoped she could still call a friend. She waved back happily and heartily until a sudden lurch of the boat nearly knocked her off her feet. Hiccup laughed a bit to himself, hearing the distant shouts of Iona at her crew as she rubbed her head.

After a few minutes, the ship was out of the dock and heading out to sea. He didn't really know when he'd see Iona again, but it was probably not going to be for a long while. She had her own problems to deal with as the Berserker chief. Dagur followers could still be hidden among the tribe. She also had to deal with reestablishing trades, dealing with alliances with other tribes, and too many more for Hiccup to think of all. The dragon watched as the sun slowly rose over the horizon as the ship sailed promisingly into the sunlight. Hiccup watched until it slowly slipped from view.

"So long...Iona," Hiccup whispered to himself.

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><p>Hiccup slowly made his way down the stairs, hearing the soft crackling of fire. He looked over and saw Astrid sleeping peacefully near the fire pit. Hiccup couldn't help but smile seeing her so at ease . The vikings that had occupied her home had left the day before, but she still found her way over her and fell asleep. He stood there for a moment, recapping the events that had unfolded over the last month.<p>

\_ "Wow...it's been nearly two months since I ended up...like this," \_ Hiccup thought to himself, mental gesturing to all of himself, "Time flies when you're having fun I guess, so much has happened since then, so much change, death, destruction, but also a lot of laughs, new friends, and certainly love." As much as he wanted to wake her and go out for a walk, he let her sleep for a while. Besides, if she was awake, she'd just complain about how she didn't get a scar or two from the battle.

Hiccup slipped out of the house, quietly shutting the door and turning to face the market. As he did Fishlegs nearly ran into him as

the teen was busy reading another book. He wanted to Gothi's a lot and apparently, she had a stockpile of magic books, ranging from beginners, to the most skilled magic users. One thing Hiccup never understood was why Gothi never told Iona about the books she had.

"Maybe because she never asked?" Hiccup thought to himself questioningly. Hiccup brushed off the subject and looked at the market. It was looking a lot better than a week ago. Boulders were moved out of the village, houses were mostly repaired, and the blood stained cobblestone was being washed down again.

"There's another stain of blood that won't be gone anytime soon," Hiccup thought to himself. While Hiccup did want to see Dagur captured and tried for his crimes, he didn't really know if he wanted to see him dead. Hiccup just couldn't want someone to die, it just didn't fit together. When he saw how brutal Dagur's death was, Hiccup felt his stomach lurch and his heart clench. He didn't think Dagur deserved it, he didn't think anyone deserved it. He was just happy Toothless was there, with him there, he felt safe, and complete.

Hiccup shook the thoughts from his head and tried to clear his mind, thinking about what to do next. He looked up and scanned the stalls, seeing Snotlout in his usual spot. As Hiccup drew closer, he noticed the viking was slacking off as usual, flicking a small ball of iron around on the stall desk. Snotlout glanced up when shadow loomed over him and rolled his eyes.

"What do you want," Snotlout asked aggressively as he usually did. Hiccup smiled, cause he knew Snotlout cared more than he'd ever let on.

"Have you seen Toothless around by any chance?" Hiccup asked. Snotlout flicked the ball another time before picking it up. Leaning back in his chair and resting his feet on the stall counter, he pointed at the path that lead to Stoick's house.

"I saw him heading to Stoick's place," Snotlout said flatly. Hiccup said his thanks and heading in that direction. His curiosity had peaked at this point.

"Why would Toothless talk to dad without me there? Seems like it be one of the most awkward atmospheres ever," Hiccup thought to himself as he walked down the cobblestone road. A loud banging sound snapped Hiccup from this thoughts. From a distance, he could see two wrestling shapes rolling around on the ground.

"The twins," Hiccup thought to himself with more happiness than annoyance. He was happy they were okay. During the battle, Ruffnut was forced to cut off her hair after a Langely grabbed her by it and refused to let go. She cut it off with her sword and stabbed the guy in the throat, kicking him down. She wouldn't stop gloating about her first kill. Tuffnut had a cut up his left eye. He got luck as the knife narrowly missed his eye and cut up his browline, definitely leaving a scar. The twins stopped their usual antics and said their hello's to Hiccup as he passed. He returned the hello and continued on his way as the twins went back to their self torturing games of theirs.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup made his way up the slop to his father's house, stopping when he heard voice inside. He could hear the two, though they weren't talking loud enough for Hiccup to hear, which he found strange.</p>

\_ "I feel like they should be yelling at each other," \_Hiccup thought to himself amusingly, \_ "No, I feel like they shouldn't even be talking without me present, I mean, that's the only time when they do talk, when I'm the mediator or something." \_He thought about it for a moment, then shrugged it off, slowly approaching the door. When the two had gone quiet for a moment, Hiccup thought it best to go in. He pushed open the door, not bothering to knock. He felt two pairs of eyes on him as he closed the door behind him. Turning towards the two, he saw Toothless and Stoick talking around the fire pit. They were both staring at him with curiously happy eyes. Hiccup looked at the two with confusion and curiosity.

"What're you guys so happy about?" Hiccup asked as he sat down next to Toothless. The Night Fury looked down at Hiccup and smiled happily.

"I should've told you sooner, but Stoick knows about us wanting to become mates...or wanting to get married as you say it," Toothless said. Hiccup's heart dropped, feeling a pool form in his stomach. His eyes easily showed the worry he was feeling. Hiccup looked over at Stoick who gave him a happy smile.

"I can't wait until the ceremony, son," Stoick said, his eyes welling up with tears. Hiccup felt his chest burst with unbelievable joy as he jumped on his father, hugging him tightly.

"The only thing I've ever wanted was to see you happy, and that dragon makes you happier than I've ever seen you before," Stoick said softly, hugging Hiccup. Stoick raised his arm and gestured to Toothless.

"This is a family hug, Toothless," Stoick said. Toothless' eyes widened a little in surprise.

\_ "He actually used my name," \_Toothless thought happily. The dragon walked over and joined in on the hug. Stoick was close to his son, Hiccup was finally able to be happy, and Toothless got the family he'd always wanted. The sun shone through the morning sky, illuminating the house inside, showing a family growing closer with each passing second.

[ARC ONE OF THREE - END]

#### 34. Link to Part 2

Welcome to The Curse of the Gods, for those new to the story, skip past this chapter and continue reading, for those who are looking to move onto the next part of the story, copy the link provided and go read! Thanks for reading!

The next arc is up! Check it out!

Its under The Gift of the Gods, hope to see you all there!

s/10754555/1/The-Gift-of-the-Gods

### 35. In Between the Arcs Part 1

\*\*Alright, one out of three remaining chapters in this story before I move onto the next arc! I really hope you are all looking forward to this as much as I am! In a few short weeks the first arc of this fantastic story will draw to a close and the next chapter of Hiccup and Toothless' lives will begin! Two more chapters and the story continues! Stick around for updates and look out for the next story, The Gift of the Gods!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>A few weeks had gone by since Dagur's death and the island of Berk slowly slid back into its usual routine. The air was colder as soft flakes of snow slowly drifted to the ground. Winter was quickly upon the village, wiping away any signs of the short summer that Berk could enjoy. Farmers had to rely on their cattle for a source of income, merchants had to slow their trade down as less villagers came by the market in the colder weather, but still, the inhabitants of Berk thrived once again.</p>

It was strange today. A light snowfall, yet virtually no breeze at all, just the glowing petals of white slowly drifting to the ground in an elegant fashion. Hiccup's bedroom window was ajar, letting the outside sky peer down upon the sleeping dragon. Soon enough, one snowflake found it's way into the room and land on the dragon's nose. Hiccup twitched his nose, trying to get the tickling sensation to leave, but to no avail. With a soft sneeze, Hiccup jolted himself awake. He looked around groggily, noticing the empty room besides himself.

"Guess he already left," Hiccup said softly. Then he realized in more depth what today really was. His chest clenched, his heart was beating like a drum, his breathing was quick, and his whole body tingled with adrenaline, excitement, and slight fear. Today was the human ritual that binded two people together for life. Today, he was going to married to Toothless.

The dragon slowly walked down the steps, stretching out his legs as he went along. The house really was empty, not even the firepit was lit. Hiccup shot a soft blast of plasma at the pit, watching as it softly hit the wood, setting it ablaze. It felt more like home when there was the soft crackling of fire in the air. Hiccup walked towards the kitchen and sat on his tail. He looked down at his paws and used his claws to reach for a knife, grasping it with talons. Hiccup held the knife firmly in his hand, moving it over to cut up a few slices of bread. With careful precise, and a bit of difficulty, the dragon managed to cut the slices until he felt he was satisfied with the number.

Hiccup had been practicing ever since Dagur was defeated. Everyday he'd try to use his claws as fingers, moving them around and doing simple tasks with them that he used to find very difficult. The claws were like fingers, only one less joint towards the top, making it

difficult for Hiccup to get the hang of using them. Toothless always encouraged him, telling him he was doing great. Considering Toothless had never figured out to use his claws as fingers, let alone think of using his claws as fingers, Hiccup couldn't help but feel just a little discouraged, yet the more Hiccup tried, the better he seemed to be getting.

Hiccup set the knife down and carried the few slices of bread he had to the fireplace. He sat down and stuck his paw over the fire with the bread. The heat didn't bother him as his tough hide protected him against the heat. It was more of a refreshing comfort feeling the warmth on his paw in contrast to the colder outside, though, he couldn't feel much coldness either. He almost always felt just about right, not too hot, or too cold. Just a perk of being a dragon, at least, in Hiccup's mind it was.

When he finished cooking the bread to a color he thought looked best. Hiccup slowly ate the toast, not daring to eat any fast in fear of losing his stomach from his nerves. While half way through his first piece, there was a prominent knock at the door followed by the door opening and then slamming close again. Astrid was there, slightly shivering as the young viking approached the firepit and sat down on a log, holding her hands out to get warm. Hiccup smiled and handed her a slice of toast. She smiled and took it, downing it quickly and returning her fingers to the fire.

"Is it that cold out?" Hiccup asked. Astrid shook her head in response.

"I wouldn't say it's cold out so much as chilly," she said with slightly numb lips, making her speech just a little off, "but I don't know where my coat is at." Hiccup rolled his eyes and looked at her as her shivering quickly died down.

"Did you bring it?" Hiccup asked softly, his throat getting tight as he said those few words. Astrid looked at the dragon and a wide smile spread across her face. She reached into her pocket and pulled out a folded piece of silk. It was a soft green color that almost perfectly matched Hiccup's eyes. Hiccup let out a soft sigh of approval, looking at the marvelously small object that mattered so much to him right now. He looked up at Astrid, the two making quick eye contact.

"Can I try it?" Hiccup asked softly. Astrid nodded her head, getting up and wrapping the long piece of silk around his neck. With a few intricate loops and a tug or two, Astrid stepped back and stared happily at her work. Hiccup smiled, feeling the silk against his tough hide and the happy look on his friend's face. Astrid's smile left for a moment before she turned away and headed towards the door.

"Stay there," she called back. Within a minute or so, the young viking returned with a small mirror. She carried it through the door and placed it against the wall of the kitchen.

"An early gift," she said with a smile, "Since you two have a serious lack of mirrors, I thought you guys might need one." Hiccup smiled and walked over towards the mirror, his eyes fixated on himself. It had been a while since he last really looked in a mirror, not since he had lived with his father. He noticed the contours of his face, the

glint of his eyes, and the way the bowtie matched his eyes perfectly, at least to him it did.

"It looks...fantastic," Hiccup said to himself partially. It was weird, something so little, so common, meant so much to him right now.

"How's he doing?" Hiccup asked softly, looking away from the mirror and towards the door. Astrid glanced over to the door as well, hearing the soft sounds of feet walking past the door as villagers went about their day.

"He seemed pretty nervous went I last saw him," Astrid said with a wink. Hiccup smiled a bit and cocked a brow at her friend.

"Toothless nervous?" he said with a bit of a chuckle, "Are you sure you met the same dragon I did?" Astrid smiled and nodded her head at the comment.

"He knows how much this means to you Hiccup, of course he'd be nervous," Astrid said soft and slowly. She had a smile on her face that was truly genuine. Hiccup nodded his head in understanding as he drew his eyes back to the mirror.

"I just want to know how nervous you are," Astrid asked quickly, "because I can't read you like Toothless." The dragon smiled and turned towards Astrid, his eyes shining with excitement.

"I feel like I'm going to puke," Hiccup said softly. Astrid scratched her arm and laughed.

"Just don't get any on the silk," she said in response.

\* \* \*

><p>The snow felt soft and slightly cold under Toothless' feet as he approached Stoick's home. He could hear sounds of feet shuffling when he stopped in front of the door. The dragon hesitated. Toothless breathed in deeply and exhaled slowly. The dragon sat back on his tail and raised one paw slowly, and he cautiously knocked on the door. A few moments passed before feet began to shuffle again, this time in the direction of the door. The doorknob turned, but the door didn't open. Another few moments went by and the door quickly swung open, scaring Toothless slightly, but he tried not to let it show. Stoick stood in the doorway, an uneasy smile spread across his face.</p>

"Toothless, please, come in," he said weirdly. Toothless walked in the doorway, noticing how uncomfortable he looked, but he still had an aura of excitement around him.

"Its the big day!" Stoick said loudly, following Toothless over to the firepit, "I'm sorry if I'm being a bit weird. I've never done this and probably never will again. Seeing my boy off." Stoick walked off into his room and returned with a bag full of different objects. Toothless assumed he would need something for the human ritual, and to be honest, he needed that something to be fantastic. This was for Hiccup after all.

Stoick rummaged through the bag, flipping through clothes and furs that were meshed together inside the bag with no real order or pattern. After a few moments, Stoick pulled out a long ribbon looking object that was a brilliant green color. The chief held it up eye level and smiled at the green piece of cloth. Toothless really didn't know what to think of it, the green piece of cloth, other than Stoick really seemed to like it.

"I wore this on my wedding day," Stoick said softly, "It picked it out because it matched her eyes perfectly. She had the most beautiful green eyes." Toothless quickly noticed the look of longing and slight despair in his eyes. He almost looked as if he was going to cry on the spot.

"Hiccup has her eyes," Stoick said, this time with more authority, "Toothless, I want you to have this." Stoick took a few steps towards the dragon and held the piece of silk out to him. Toothless eyed the object and sniffed at it a few times, not really sure what to make out of it.

"What do I do with it?" Toothless asked innocently. Stoick had to contain his laughter, but a bright smile still shone through. Getting closer to the dragon, Stoick wrapped the green silk around the dragon's neck carefully, looping it through and tying it together. Stoick had once worn the tie so it was already designed for a more burly man, but it wasn't exactly for a dragon. The tie wasn't as long as it should've been and was kind of short, but it still looked fantastic on him. Stoick took a few steps back and eyed the dragon, sizing him up with the tie.

Stoick's extended stare mixed with the smile on his face made Toothless a little uncomfortable. The dragon looked down at the woven green silk around his neck, seeing it slowly droop down his chest. He remembered seeing some humans wearing cloth like this during important events, though, they rarely ever did wear them. Now he understood the significance of the this cloth.

"Just incase you didn't know, its called a tie," Stoick said, his voice cracking at the end of his sentence. The old chief looked like he was about to crack, but he seemed to unbelievably happy.

"Well, I can definitely say I never thought my son would be marrying a dragon," Stoick said softly, "but I can also say that I couldn't have picked anyone better." Toothless smiled without realizing, feeling his cheeks fill with a heated sensation. Stoick rarely complimented him, and when he did, it always made Toothless feel so happy inside. He always wished for Stoick's approval, and it seemed, at the end of the road, he finally did.

The chief got up slowly and walked over to Toothless, looking at the dragon with soft, yet sharp eyes. Quickly, the chief pulled the dragon into a tight hug. Toothless hesitated for a few moments before slowly wrapping his arms around his future father-in-law.

"Take good care of him," Stoick said softly, "Son."

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup felt an itch on his cheek, but he didn't dare move out of fear of messing something up or ruining the paint on his face. Both

the dragons had requested they don the markings of protection given to them by Frey, the chief of the Magnhild tribe. Hiccup distinctly remembered what the lines looked like and how they flowed. It was strange to him how much detail he could retain with his new mind.<p>

Hiccup stood in the dimly lit room, waiting patiently for Stoick to come and lead him towards the altar where Gothi was waiting patiently with Toothless to begin the ceremony. The young Night Fury had truthfully only seen the ceremony performed once or twice, and he knew his was different in just about every way. Trying to keep his thoughts suppressed and calm, Hiccup drew close to a mirror and looked at his reflection. He'd been doing that a lot lately, trying to soak in the details of his face. In those first few weeks he rarely wanted to look at his face, fearing what he might see. The weeks after that, he didn't really have time to do anything of the sorts, nor did he care very much what he looked like. Now, however, he wanted to look his best, no, he needed to, for Toothless.

In the reflection, Hiccup saw the green body paint that matched perfectly with his eyes and tie. His heart nearly skipped a beat when he looked at himself. It was weird to think, but he actually thought he looked good, almost good enough for Toothless. The soft, curving lines that created a melody of the sorts on Hiccup's contours brought out his features more, making him seem different, but in a good way.

\_ "Would it be weird to tell him I've loved him since before I even became a dragon?" \_Hiccup thought to himself, and after a couple seconds, shook his head no, "That would definitely give \_off a weird vibe." \_

"Are you ready?" a strong voice said as the sound of a closing door echoed through the small room. Hiccup looked to his right and saw his father standing there. He wasn't wearing his usual furs and clothing, but more formal attire, yet still strikingly viking and rough. Hiccup new it was an improvement, even if by a small margin.

"I..." Hiccup started off, "I think so." Stoick walked over and pulled a stool close to him, looking at his son.

"Son," Stoick started off, "You know I'm not good at this kind of stuff, but I'll give it my best. I've always been proud of you, and I always will be. You always made the right choice, even if I wasn't willing to believe it. You went against the majority to do what's right. You are one of the bravest vikings I've ever met, and I couldn't ask for a better son. Today is your day, son. No matter what I say, or what I do, just know I'm just trying to protect you, even if it means my own life for yours. I will always love you, Hiccup." Hiccup could feel his eyes welling up when a tear drifted from his eye and started down his cheek before Stoick stopped it, wiping it away quickly.

"Thank you," Hiccup said, "I know it was hard without mom here, but you did the best you could. I'll live up to your expectations and your hopes dad, I promise. I will always love you, even if I do get angry with you. Thank for being the dad I needed." Stoick quickly pulled his son in for a hug, careful to not let him see the tears flowing down his cheeks. He'd never let his son see him being weak, especially not today. He needed to be strong, not just for his son,

but for Berk. Stoick pulled away, wiping away the tears before Hiccup could catch a glimpse and motioned towards the door.

"It's time," he said softly, waiting for his son to get in line with him, "Hold on." Stoick knelt down and straightened out the bowtie and smiled at his boy. Standing upright, Stoick held the door open as Hiccup exited the room and out into the chilly air. It was snowing lightly, yet the sun still shone in the distance, ready to go under the great expanses of the oceans. The walk to the where the ceremony would be held was still a few minutes away. The pair walked in blissful silence, just enjoying each others company for the time being.

The ceremony was being held on the ridge where Hiccup original shot Toothless down at. It was symbolic to them both. The start of a new era began there, why not the start of another? The soft dirt path that lead up there was covered with a light layer of snow that crunched under their fit as they went along, creating a strange rhythm of music composed by the Gods themselves. Hiccup could hear the idle chatter amongst the small amount of guests gathered at the ceremony. The dragon and the chief rounded a tree and stood at the end of the rows of crudely arranged seats. Hiccup could see Astrid, Stormfly, Snotlout, Hookfang, Fishlegs, Meatlug, the twins, and Barf and Belch. He saw Spitelout, Gobber, Johan, and a few others. Hiccup wished Iona could've been there, but he already knew her answer, and to be honest, he didn't think Toothless would enjoy having her there too much.

A loud beat of drums started up suddenly as eyes turned towards Stoick and Hiccup as they slowly walked down the isle created by the chairs. Up ahead, Hiccup could see Toothless, standing there with a loving look in his eyes. He looked so beautiful as snowflakes slowly drifted past his face. The lines drawn on his face were commanding and fierce, but provided such safety and grace that it just captured Hiccup. Toothless' emerald eyes were matched with the paint color and his cute tie. Hiccup's heart was beating faster with each step he took.

\_ "How did I get so lucky?" \_ Hiccup thought to himself.

\_ "How did I get so lucky?" \_ Toothless thought to himself. Hiccup was walking towards him, that absolutely adorable bowtie carefully woven around his neck. It looked so good on him. Toothless could feel his heart pounding hard with each step Hiccup took closer to him. Those soft lines on his face just brought out his flawless features. They were soft and melodic, yet they had an essence of strength and courage that intertwined with his beautiful face.

With a few more steps, Hiccup stood face to face with Toothless. The two dragon's stared into each other's eyes lovingly as Gothi prepared herself in front of the dragon's. She cleared her voice and in a frail, but majestic tone, she carried on.

"Under the laws placed by our forefathers, and our traditions as vikings, I do hereby commence this ceremonial bonding between these two male companions. You've showed your courage on the battlefield, as well as proven yourselves worthy vikings, and worthy dragons. Through our age old traditions and rites, I must ask each dragon to hold out their hand," Gothi said. The dragon's happily obliged and held their respective paws out. Gothi pulled a small knife from her

belt and made a small cut on each dragon's paw, making sure she drew blood. Turning around, Gothi moved a bucket in front of her, one filled with coal.

"As a tradition exclusive to you two, I ask for you to light the coal with," Gothi said. Hiccup and Toothless sent a small, gentle flame down to the bucket, watching as the flames roared to life. She held both of the dragon's paws and moved them over the bucket of coals.

"Squeeze the blood from your paws," she said softly, "Extinguish the ties you've had in the past, purify your hearts for one another." The dragon's slowly squeezed their paws, watching as a few drops of each of their blood intermingled and crashed into the coals, ending their short existence with a swift sizzle.

"As our customs would say, 'Now we must place the rings on the engaged fingers,'" Gothi said, in a louder voice than before, one that shone with a hint of pride, and was filled with happiness and excitement. Toothless reached behind him, and took a band from Hookfang and held his paw out to Hiccup. In a swift movement, the dragon placed the band on Hiccup's left wrist. It was a golden color that was accompanied by soft, melodic, twisting lines and a magnificent design. Hiccup couldn't help but smile, feeling the band go around his wrist.

Hiccup reached for his band and carefully took it from his father. It was golden, and had more of a commanding presence. Its lines twisted and had harder edges, but still maintained that graceful motion. Both of the bands were carefully designed after the dragons' symbols of protection. With each other, they will always be safe, always be happy, and always be brave.

Hiccup slowly placed the band around Toothless' wrist, taking more time than Toothless to make sure it was on right and just the way he wanted it to be. Gothi looked at Hiccup sweetly, and continued on with her speech.

"The two have been purified and bonded physically by the bonds of their ancestors," Gothi said softly once again, "Unite spiritually with a bonding kiss that will forever bind your destinies together." The two dragon's looked to each other. Toothless' heart was pounding, but he tried his hardest not to let his nerves show. Hiccup, on the other hand, was slightly trembling and a light tint of blue flooded his cheeks. The two slowly leaned in and shared the kiss Hiccup had been waiting his whole life for.

Hiccup could feel the heat Toothless gave off as their lips touched softly together. Through the darkness of his closed eyes he could still see Toothless standing there, looking so amazing handsome and beautiful. It was hard to believe this was his life now, but, it truly was.

Cheering erupted from the seated vikings. Hoots and hollers were going left and right as Hiccup smiled, pulling away from the kiss and resting his head against Toothless'. They remained quite while the cheering went on, just immersing themselves in each other's warmth. Today was their day, and nothing was going to ruin it. Dagur was gone, and they could move on to their next adventure.

As the snow fell and the light wind blew, the two dragons stood intertwined, their destinies, now forever bonded.

### 36. In Between the Arcs Part 2 - Finale

\*\*The Final Chapter\*\*

\*\*Warning: This chapter contains sexual material. Reader discretion is advised.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>The floor of the cave felt soft under Hiccup's paws. The fur spread out along the hard rock made for a comfortable arrangement. To be completely honest, Hiccup felt as if he was going to pass out at anytime. He felt even worse than he did before his wedding nearly a week ago. His heart pounded as he recalled the short conversations that the two dragon's had regarding the subject.</p>

\* \* \*

><p>"This is all up to you whether this happens or not," Hiccup remembered Toothless saying sweetly. The smaller dragon shifted uncomfortably, thinking of the more intimate thoughts, blush shining through his scales. Hiccup couldn't forget the first time they had an intimate time, but it was under severely different circumstances. While he knew Toothless would behave very differently, he was still very scared and nervous about it.</p>

\_ "Shouldn't I be more willing of this?" \_Hiccup thought to himself, \_ "Last time I wanted him home, even if it meant letting him get out his urges to do it. This time its to tie us together...the dragon mating rituals...bring us closer together. For me, this relationship was validated when we got married...but for him, it still doesn't feel like we are." \_

Toothless could see the thoughts being wrestled inside his companions head. Even if other people couldn't, he could see right into Hiccup's eyes and know almost exactly what he was feeling. The dragon closed his eyes softly and opened them back up slowly, allowing his vision to quickly adjust to Hiccup's face.

"I understand that you're worried about this," Toothless said softly, "Dragon's usually mate for life, and I still remember the last time we tried this sort of thing. I feel like I lost a part of you that day...the trust on that level of our relationship was damaged." Toothless could easily see Hiccup trying his hardest to avoid direct eye contact, pretty much confirming that lack of trust. It was strange to Toothless, for everything else, Hiccup would readily trust him, but did he really screw it up that badly the first time? Did he really scare and hurt him that much? Surely he couldn't have...right?

"Did...did I hurt you that much?" Toothless asked softly, "Did I scare you so much that you...you can't trust me on an intimate level anymore?" Almost immediately, Hiccup's eyes snapped up and he shook his head wildly.

"No!" Hiccup nearly yelled, "I mean...just, no. I'm just a little

worried it won't go like you want it. For me, the ceremony was all I needed, but for you, this ceremony is all you need. I'm just...scared I'll do something wrong or I won't fulfill my duty as...as your mate." Hiccup's words trailed off into a worried silence as his little confession came to a close. Toothless shook his head, smiling in the process. The larger dragon pulled his counterpart into a warm embrace, holding him closely.

"Hic, don't worry about that kind of stuff," Toothless said, "I don't care if it doesn't go as plan, as long as its you and me...thats really all I need. Besides, we'll have time to improve in the future." The dragon said his last few words in a more seductive and low tone, causing Hiccup to blush madly. The smaller dragon buried his face into Toothless to avoid eye contact and to hide his blushing face.

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup stood on the furs thinking back to those moments, blushing just thinking of the situation. The dragon looked around him, impressed with how well the caved looked and felt. Toothless took it upon himself to make the cave as comfortable as possible, lining the floor with soft furs, covering the entrance with a think piece of cloth, and lighting a few candles here and there. Hiccup had hard time believing the dragon did this all by himself, but if he said he did, then he would believe him.</p>

The young Night Fury sat alone in the cave, waiting patiently for Toothless to return. Outside the comfortable cave was the cove where Hiccup and Toothless forged their friendship all those months ago, faced a new challenge when Hiccup first changed, and shared their first intimate moments.

"It's weird to think that next week will be one year," Hiccup thought to himself. The dragon readied a smile when he saw the cloth covering the entrance move, thinking Toothless had returned. The movements subsided and then returned slowly, making the dragon realize it was just the strong winds pushing against the cloth. Feeling slightly disappointed, Hiccup curled up on the furs, letting himself get comfortable.

"He said he forgot something," Hiccup muttered to himself, "but didn't think it'd take this long, otherwise I would've gone with him." As he said those last few words, he felt a knot form in his stomach. He hoped it would go away like earlier, but this one persisted. Hiccup couldn't help but think of what was about to happen. It wasn't just sex, it was a ritual that binded two dragons together for life. He truthfully was very happy about that, but he couldn't help but feel so nervous about it too. Toothless never explained what was going to happen, just that it would be the two of them.

\_ "Just be happy its something that doesn't need a witness," \_Hiccup thought to himself, covering his face with his paws, hoping to forget the thought.

"Am I interrupting something?" A soothing voice called out. Hiccup brought a paw down from his face, seeing Toothless pushing his way into the cave. Soft winds blew in flakes of snow that slowly drifted to the floor and melted into the furs. The makeshift cloth door

slowly fell back into place as Toothless' tail slipped through. The dragon stood there, raising a brow questioningly at his companion, waiting for a response. Hiccup smiled awkwardly and shook his head in response.

"Should I ask what took so long?" Hiccup asked cautiously. Toothless walked over to the left side of the cave and slipped a bag off his shoulder.

"Of course," Toothless said with a soft smile, "If you're worried your doing something wrong, don't be Hic. Astrid was back home, and since we didn't really want anyone to know what we were doing, I had to be more careful getting the things we need. Would've been a lot simpler if I didn't space out earlier while fixing this place up." Toothless reached into the bag, trying to make use of his claws. Lately, the two dragons had been trying to utilized their claws in place of fingers, seeing how it would make both their lives much easier. So far, its been going slow, specifically for Toothless. As Toothless grabbed onto a bottle, he struggle to properly grip it and it slipped through his claws and back into the bag with a soft thud.

Hiccup couldn't help but restrain some soft laughter seeing his love struggle so much with a relatively simple task. The smaller dragon came up behind Toothless and ran his paw along his arm, ending with Hiccup's paw on top of Toothless' larger paw. Hiccup guided Toothless' paw back into the back and gripped onto the bottle once again. The smaller dragon's claws slowly increased pressure onto the larger's as they slowly pulled up the bottle. Hiccup slowly released his paw, letting Toothless manage on his own, setting the bottle down next to him.

As Toothless rummaged through the bag again, Hiccup picked up the bottle, noticing the reddish liquid contained inside. It was an interesting red, one he'd definitely seen many times before, both in combat, and on his wedding day.

"Body paint?" Hiccup asked curiously. Toothless nodded his head, struggling to grip another bottle and bring it out.

"Okay, that isn't exactly part of the traditional ritual, but I thought it would be nice to add our own special touch to it," Toothless said with a smile, looking over to Hiccup. The smaller dragon smiled back, looking back down at the bottle and placing back where Toothless originally laid it. The larger dragon finally got a hold of the next bottle firmly, slowly pulled it out, and placed it next to the body paint. Hiccup picked the bottle up and looked at it, seeing the liquids inside swirl around as he twirled it between his claws.

"And this?" Hiccup asked, curiosity edging more and more into his mind with each object Toothless pulled out. Toothless stopped momentarily and glanced at the bottle before a smile spread upon his face.

"That's what you would call lubricant," Toothless said, "Or lube." Hiccup blushed at the words and quickly set bottle full of clear liquids down and sat a few feet away from Toothless, patiently waiting. His heart was beating quickly and his chest was tingling with anticipation.

Toothless glanced over his shoulder, seeing Hiccup fidget quietly, waiting for the time to come. The dragon placed the last bottle next to the two others and closed the bag. Toothless picked up the last bottle he placed down and held it carefully in his paw. The dragon walked over to Hiccup, holding the bottle delicately in his mouth.

Hiccup looked up, seeing a paw handing him a bottle full of a white liquid. The dragon cautiously took it from Toothless, curious as to what the substance was. It moved slowly in the bottle like it was thick and syrupy. He popped the top off the bottle and sniffed at it cautiously with an interesting smell hitting his sense. It wasn't bad so much as it wasn't good. It was almost odorless in a way, but still had something mixed in with it.

"What is it?" Hiccup asked, bringing the bottle closer to his eyes.

"Something you need to drink," Toothless said, tapping the top of the bottle, "It will help you relax. Only take a few sips of it, its pretty powerful stuff." Hiccup looked at him and down at the bottle again.

"Tooth...what is it?" Hiccup asked again, this time more concerned about what it really was. Hiccup was really worried about what it would do to him, more of what it was made out of.

"Its a mixture of plants and roots, something dragons use to..." Toothless trailed off for a moment, trying to find words to explain, "Relax, and..uh...get in the mood more easily...commonly used for mating..." For the first time, Hiccup saw a bit of blush tinge his dragon's face. The smaller dragon looked a little hesitant, but took a few small sips from the bottle. The taste was very peculiar at best containing what tasted like milk, honey, but also strongly sour, almost revoltingly so. Hiccup shook his head, swallowing many times to get the taste out of his mouth.

Toothless laughed a bit, seeing his love show his disdain for the strange drink. Taking the bottle from him, Toothless braced himself for the unusual taste and drank it swiftly. Dunking it down, he pushed past the taste quickly and set the bottle aside. Seeing Hiccup still shaking his head a bit, only this time with a bit of confusion in his eyes.

"How are you feeling?" Toothless asked softly, bringing one paw up to his cheek comfortingly. Hiccup pressed against it, closing his eyes and feeling the heat his companion gave off.

"I feel warm all over, all tingly," Hiccup said, taking Toothless' paw and placing it on his chest, "Right here mostly." Toothless could feel Hiccup's heartbeat and soft, rhythmic breaths accompanied by the soft rumble of purrs. Also starting to feel the effects of the mixture, Toothless took a deep breath and pulled his paw away from Hiccup slowly. Walking over towards the body paint, he motioned Hiccup closer. Putting one claw in delicately, Toothless pulled out some of the red paint and turned towards his love. In a few delicate strokes, Toothless painted the symbols of protection Frey once gave to them. After a few minutes, both the dragon's were painted with each their respective markings.

"Why did you want to do this?" Hiccup asked, adding the final touches to Toothless' markings. The dragon looked down for a moment, then back up, staring into his love's eyes.

"I want these to be more than just symbols and markings of protection, I want them to represent us together," Toothless said with a slight smile, "They're one thing that ties us together, that shows our unity, our love." Hiccup stopped momentarily, hearing his final few words before continuing the touch ups. Once the markings were how Hiccup wanted them to look, he put the bottle of paint down and wiped his claw on one of the carpets. Looking back up, he quickly kissed Toothless, the two dragons falling onto their backs. Toothless felt warm lips pressed against his own and paws wrapped snugly around his neck. After a few moments, those warm lips were gone and were replaced with a soft voice.

"I love you so much," Hiccup said, putting his head against Toothless'. The larger dragon smiled and closed his eyes, enjoying the moment. The heat from the liquid had spread throughout each dragon's body, allowing them to feel at ease, and ready.

"I love you too, more than you may ever know," Toothless said in a near whisper. Rolling over, Toothless looked down at Hiccup and kissed him softly.

"Are you ready?" Toothless whispered. A few moments of silence went by before Hiccup responded.

"Yes," Hiccup responded, with a tinge of confidence lining his voice. Toothless slowly lowered himself, licking Hiccup softly as he went farther and farther down the dragons stomach until he reached his slit. A few quick licks sent shivers down Hiccup's spine as he struggled to suppress a moan. Hiccup's length quickly pushed its way out into the warm cave air. Toothless looked up at Hiccup, noticing the blush enveloping his face as he quickly brought his paws up to cover his face.

"D-don't look at me," Hiccup muttered out, embarrassed. Toothless smiled and looked back down, dragging his tongue along Hiccup's length. A soft, cute moan escaped the dragon's mouth, letting Toothless know he was doing well. In a quick movement, Toothless pushed his head forward, taking in Hiccup's entire length. Hiccup started to let out a loud moan before he cut himself off with his paws, yet his eyes still shone with ecstasy.

Toothless slowly bobbed his head up and down in a smooth rhythmic fashion. With each time the dragon went down, Hiccup suppressed another moan, failing half the time resulting in half moans, half squeaks making it through his paws.

"T-toothless," Hiccup said suddenly, "I-I'm getting close." Toothless slowly dragged his head up, letting Hiccup's length slowly fall out of his mouth. The dragon reached behind him, grabbing a bottle, albeit with a bit of struggle. Bringing it around, he popped the top off and poured some of the clear liquid on his claws.

Hiccup looked on with anticipation. He could see the clear liquid pour onto Toothless' claws, coated it and making it shine in the light of the candles. Toothless looked towards Hiccup before he set

the bottle down.

"Are you ready?" Toothless asked softly. Hiccup could see the longing in his eyes, the want to mate with him written out in plain norse.

"Yes," Hiccup finally managed to say after what felt like an eternity. Toothless nodded in response and slowly brought one of his dull claws towards Hiccup's entrance. With a delicate and cautious movement, Toothless slowly slid it in, eliciting a slightly pained response from Hiccup. After a few slow movements, the pained grunts turned into pleasure filled moans.

"You enjoying yourself?" Toothless asked teasingly.

"S-shut up," Hiccup responded, blush taking over his face. When he felt Hiccup was adjusted well enough, Toothless inserted another dull claw and picked up the pace slightly, stretching out Hiccup's entrance well enough, but not as to hurt him. Hiccup panted in response, his length twitching against the warm air.

"Do you think you're ready?" Toothless asked softly, slowly pushing his dull claws in and out of his companion. Hiccup took a long breath and looked towards his love, and nodded his head in confirmation.

"Yes," Hiccup responded once again. Toothless reached back and fumbled for the bottle once again, finally grasping it in his claws. With a quick pour, Toothless coated his hand with lube, rubbing it over his already erect dragon member. Setting the bottle down, Toothless loomed over Hiccup, staring down into his loves eyes. The two locked eyes for a few short moments, panting into the air thick with anticipation. Slowly, Toothless brought his lips down and kissed Hiccup, soft and delicately.

Just as delicately as he kissed his love, Toothless slowly brought his length along Hiccup's entrance. Hiccup held his breath for a short moment before breathing out softly, closing his eyes and nodding his head slowly. Toothless slowly prodded at Hiccup's entrance before slowly pushing his length into his love, eliciting a mixture of pained and pleasured moans. Inch after inch plunged into Hiccup before Toothless had reached his end. The two laid there for a few moments, letting each other get adjusted to the new sensations.

"How are you doing?" Toothless whispered into Hiccup's ear. Hiccup squirmed slightly beneath his counterpart but stopped and relaxed his body as much as possible.

"F-fine, I'm doing fine," Hiccup finally managed to rasp out, clearly not used to the intrusion, but able to get adjusted more quickly this time around.

"You can...uh...start moving," Hiccup said softly, unable to make eye contact with Toothless. Toothless, however, remained motionless much to the confusion of Hiccup who still didn't want to make eye contact.

"Hiccup," Toothless said, "Please look at me, Hic." Hiccup slowly turned his gaze to Toothless, seeing the lust and love in his eyes.

It was plainly written out on his face for all to see, just as he'd always been with his emotions.

"The last thing I want is for you to feel uncomfortable with this," the dragon nearly whispered, "I want us to go into this together, both wanting this to happen." Hiccup looked into his lover's eyes and looked down for a moment, looking at the weird view before. He'd never really seen himself being penetrated and it was quite the unusual sight, at least for him. Bringing his view back up, Hiccup went in for a quick kiss and nodded his head.

"Alright," Hiccup said with slight confidence, "No awkward Hiccup." Toothless shook his head mildly and smiled down at him.

The larger dragon slowly pulled his length out, being met with a soft moan from his counterpart as he slowly pushed it back in. Toothless had a hard time containing himself, holding back loud moans as he slowly pushed and pulled in erratic yet somewhat rhythmic motions. With each thrust, Hiccup let out a soft moan, more of a squeak, in response, blush coating his face, and heat flourishing in his body.

"Go faster," Hiccup squeaked out, pushing against Toothless as he slowly pushed into him. The dragon quickly obliged and slowly thrusted faster and faster, being met with loud moans of ecstasy that echoed throughout the cave. Toothless let soft grunts and moans out, succumbing to his desire and letting his pleasure be known. Hiccup pushed harder against Toothless, wanting him to be pushed further and further into him, craving that feeling he felt once before. In a sudden thrust, Toothless rubbed against Hiccup's prostate which caused the dragon to loudly moan in pleasure, catching Toothless off guard.

"Are...are you okay?" Toothless asked through heavy breaths. Hiccup nodded his head quickly, trying to catch his breath.

"Please," Hiccup said with a soft intensity, "Please more...Tooth." The begging look on Hiccup's face.

\_He is so sexy,\_ \_Toothless thought to himself, feeling a lining of blush take over his place. The dragon couldn't help but be mesmerized by his love's innocent lust. Toothless nodded and pushed in, again hitting that special spot in Hiccup, taking him closer and closer towards the edge. Toothless himself could feel that feeling building up with each thrust.

Hiccup noticed the more aggressive and quick thrusts hitting against him, a little sting with a load of pleasure to accompany it. The smaller dragon looked down, seeing pre dribble down from his length and the aggressive thrusting of Toothless. Hiccup looked back up, seeing the look of pleasure on his love's face and knew he was going to cum soon.

"Toothless, I love you," Hiccup said in a seductive manner. Toothless didn't slow his thrusting, and looked down at Hiccup with lust filled eyes.

"I love you too," the dragon said, "so much." Hiccup pushed his head forward, locking lips with his love, feeling himself begin to build up. Breaking off the kiss, Hiccup wrapped his arms around Toothless'

neck and pulled him into a tight embrace.

"Toothless!" Hiccup nearly shouted, feeling himself reaching his peak.

"Hiccup!" Toothless roared, thrusting all the way in, hitting Hiccup's prostate, sending both of them over the edge in a mess of moans and soft squeals of pleasure.

\* \* \*

><p>The two laid there in each other's presence, held together in a tight embrace. The air was dying down with the feelings of sex, lust, and baited breaths. Hiccup had laid his head on Toothless' chest, feeling his deep, strong breaths and might heartbeat under his thick skin. The candles were winding down to their final straws yet still provided the room with a beautifully dim atmosphere, just enough for the dragon's to see fine.</p>

"Toothless?" Hiccup whispered out, hoping his love was still awake.

"Yeah?" the dragon whispered back. There was a momentary pause before any words were said. In that time, a thousand words were being said, a thousand different scenarios were being played out simultaneously.

"What does this mean?" Hiccup said softly. Silenced followed once again, only this time, it truly was silence.

"It may not seem like it," Toothless started off, "but we are mates now. Things won't be any different, but I hope we're closer after this. Normally it's difficult to tell when dragon's are mated, but then there are ones where you can just...tell. Their scent, the way they walk together, the way they talk. Just, the two of them, you can tell. I don't know if we're like that now...but I know that we'll be those dragons. Right now, let's just enjoy our first few moments as mates together." Toothless shifted lower and pulled Hiccup closer to him, feeling the warmth his love gave off, wanting no harm to ever come to him, though he knew deep down he wouldn't be able to stop it, but he'd be damn if he ever laid down and let it happen.

"Toothless," Hiccup said, feeling the dragon shift his head down in response, "I love you so much. Let's stay here for a little while...its getting dark out...lets just...sleep here tonight." Toothless nodded in response, licking his mate's head affectionately.

"Then we shall my beautiful mate," Toothless said softly. As the moments drifted on, and the light from the candles drifted lower and lower, Hiccup felt himself floating off into the dreamscape.

"Toothless," Hiccup said, nearly asleep, "Don't ever leave me..."

Toothless looked down at his love with a soft smile on his face, holding him closely.

"I'll never leave you...my love...my mate..."

### 37. Q&A and INFO

And with that, Arc One comes to a close. That leaves two or three, depending on what I choose in the future, Arcs remaining in the overall story. I still have a lot left in my tank, and I'm not stopping after Arc One. I might just be a little ambitious, but I want to expand my universe, build up on my characters, and introduce new ideas, new places, and new adventures.

Arc Two will be coming soon, but I will be posting two or three In-Between the Arcs Chapters which will detail the lives of Hiccup, Toothless, and maybe a few others as the two dragons as they dragons become married, and become mates for life, so it might be a few weeks before Arc 2 starts, so deal with the filler chapters for now. On another note, as you've may have seen, I've been updating weekly now, which is my upload schedule now. I have school and other responsibilities that prevent me uploading like I used to, so bear with me. Also, telling me to hurry up and update isn't helping either, it just aggravates me more because I've already explained why I can't upload, and those people have chosen to ignore it anyway.

Now that's out of the way, on with the Q&A

Now, I'd like to do a Q&A (Question and Answer) for anyone out there who might have some questions about the story as it stands. You can me about the characters, about certain events, really anything you can think of. Ask the characters themselves if you want to, just keep it moderately clean. ;)

Now, in order to have a question answered, just post a review and start off with the statement:

Q&A Question:

And then state your question.

You can also send me a private message if you'd rather not have your username known.

When I get enough questions, I'll edit this chapter and post the questions and answer below this explanation, so I hope you all will participate and get your questions answered!

For now, re-read the story if you want, get caught up on the events leading up to now, and be sure to stick around, Arc 2 is coming soon.

Q&A QUESTIONS:

\* \* \*

><p><strong>TrustyFoxy:<strong>

Will Hiccup ever be able to invent again?

\*\*ANSWER:\*\*

I think in arc 2 or 3 I'll have him inventing some new gadgets that could have an impact on the story.. Since he'll be more used to his dragon body, he'll be able to draw and design once again.

\* \* \*

><p><strong> .7:<strong>

will you bring in new night fury's ?

\*\*ANSWER:\*\*

Actually, I had planned to implement a female Night Fury in the first arc, but quickly decided against it. The first arc is about the bond that grows between Hiccup and Toothless and I needed that to be the main focus. In the second arc, they will be mates and will have to overcome obstacles as they go along. In the future, quite possibly the second arc, I will include another Night Fury, maybe even more than that, to test the dragon's love.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Morcerf:<strong>

Will arcs 2 and 3 be posted in this story, or will you make separate ones?

\*\*ANSWER:\*\*

I've been debating on whether or not to continue it on this story or make a second one. It all really boils down to changing the story name. I don't really know if The Curse of the Gods can really fit the theme anymore. That was more or less the idea of the first arc, turning a curse into a gift. If I do make another story for the next arc, then I'd have to decide a new name, preferably The Gift of the Gods, but I'm not quite sure. I'm just worried that if I make the next arc into another story, that followers I have on here will not see it, or it won't be as successful. Another thing I'm worried about is the length this story would have. If I keep going, then this story will be ridiculously long and I may lose people and new readers because of that. I think in the end, I'll move it to another story, and I'll leave a few links to it at the ending of this arc, the Q&A, and the final chapter of this story for people to follow and continue on. I hope this answer's your question!

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Flybykid:<strong>

Yay, there is still more story to be had!

Q&A Question: What happened to the kid (his name slips my mind) who caused Hiccup and Toothless to fall off the cliff? Is he still running around somewhere?

\*\*ANSWER:\*\*

His name is Destin, and yes he is alive and well, running around. He's still very relevant and I'm trying to decide if I want to use

him in the next arc, the third, or give him his own. I think I might wait and put him in the third arc, but you never know, I may change my mind midway through the second and have him pop up somewhere. He's alive, he's still running around, and he's still just as insane.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Alvinsimon:<strong>

Will hiccup and toothless be able to have to have a baby?

\*\*ANSWER:\*\*

I've actually given this some thought and that really depends on how the third arc plays out and if I include other Night Furies. They could end up adopting a kid along the way, maybe a child Night Fury who was lost or abandoned, but if you meant a child of their own, biologically speaking, two males cannot have a child. I apologize to anyone who wanted Hiccup to become pregnant or any of that stuff, but mpreg isn't in this story. But in the future, they might just adopt a kid. Hope this answers your question since I really don't know myself.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>NoXVZhuusox:<strong>

Excuse me, but will there be anymore antagonists like Dagur in Arc 2 and/or 3?

\*\*ANSWER:\*\*

Yes, actually. In each Arc, there will be a specific antagonist(s) that the characters will have to face. There will be a mixture of cannon, and non-cannon enemies who will cause trouble in the viking world. I'm trying to structure each antagonist's personality differently so that they are, in a sense, an antagonist, but are unique, terrifying, and great villains in their own way. I portrayed Dagur as a strong, insane viking with little moral boundaries. He went about in a calm mood that created a dead atmosphere as he went along. A strong, mentally troubled villain who was calm and cool-headed. Now, the next antagonist could be very different from Dagur, or share some similarities while still maintaining their own persona. As the story goes along, however, our characters will be getting stronger, more independent, and ready to face anything their foes have to throw at them. Hope this answered your question, with a little more of a ramble on my part.

### 38. Until Next Time - Another Arc Awaits!

With that, my first story comes to a close, but don't fret! I will be releasing the next arc of Hiccup and Toothless' story! I hope you will all stick around for the it's coming in the near future! I apologize for the lack of updates, schooling is pretty time consuming on top of my own life and musical practice I need to fulfill.

I'm so happy to all the people who stuck around since the beginning and who showed support. I seriously appreciate it, you really help me

push this story onward. Thank you so much for this, for giving me the opportunity to do this and have a following, even if it may be relatively small, its a following nonetheless.

The next arc, The Gift of the Gods will be starting up in the next week or two. I still need to do some preliminary outlines and mapping for the arc. I wanted this new arc to be much more structure, detailed, and have a better plot. The first arc, I had a basic outline or ideas and made certain things up as I went along, which, surprisingly, seemed to work out pretty well this time. Keep with me guys, I hope you'll stick around to see the next arc off. Give me some time, and I'll be sure to deliver a story I hope you can all enjoy.

Until next time.

\_~Akos\_

End  
file.